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The Antioch Review

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. . . Featuring . . .

WEAPONS SECRET AND SCIENTIFIC
—William Gilman

UN CONTROL OF ATOMIC ENERGY
—Emile Benoit-Smullyan

EDMUND WILSON: INTRANSIGENT
—Granville Hicks

COMMENT ON "NEW PARTY IDEAS"
—Jack Kroll, A. Philip Randolph, Charles M. LaFollette, Boris Shiskin, Norman Thomas, Harry W. Laidler, Donald Montgomery, Victor G. Reuther, and others.

Short Stories by Ruth McCoy Harris and Paul Selvin

Other Articles by Louis Filler, Jane Mayhall, Kathleen Thayer, Daniel Aaron, T. Swann Harding, Lauren K. Soth.

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The ANTIOCH REVIEW

"Why should there not be a patient confidence in the ultimate justice of the people? Is there any better or equal hope in the world?"

—ABRAHAM LINCOLN

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WEAPONS SECRET AND SCIENTIFIC

By WILLIAM GILMAN

FAR LARGER THAN THE B-29, secrecy spanned the entire global war. Its wings rested protectively over each D-Day, likewise over realms inhabited by modern Mars' elephantine brother, Snafu. It shielded movements of the war leaders, also of the camp followers and visiting firemen. It edited reports of brilliant victory and smothered those telling of blundering defeat. Even a tenth-rate war gadget had the "Top Secret" label slapped—often too conspicuously—upon it. But secrecy is automatically faced by its opposite number, espionage. The have-not wants to have; the know-not wants to know. Spying bees come seeking the nectared know-how.

It was so with radar, very much a first-rate thing and therefore pluperfect secret. This was the art of sending radio pulses into the air, like the poet's arrow. There were those which "fell to earth," we knew not where—nor did we care. But those bouncing back through fog, darkness, distance, to the sender's screen—they had struck something, and the best apparatus was that which identified the bogie accurately as a German plane, Japanese cruiser or, mayhap, a flock of birds.

Originally, it was a detection device. But when this marvelous eye was synchronized with an ack-ack battery, bombsight, or navy gun, target-hitting entered a new era.

Radar has been called the greatest weapon of our late push-button war. It certainly was the most versatile—England's savior in defense against bomber and submarine, our guiding eye in offense, effective on land, sea, and in the air. Whether it was greatest or not can be best argued in barrooms. Radar's electronic brother, the proximity fuse, was pretty good too. So was its neutron cousin, the stupendous atom bomb. But radar was at work long before the magic fuse, and The Bomb made its splash only at the war's very end. Moreover, there was good and not-so-good radar. The Germans and Japanese had it too. So did the Russians. Anglo-American radar wasn't so much a "secret" weapon as a better one

and that is what must always be remembered whenever we tend to wax melodramatic over secret armament.

In early 1941, Commander Max Ponzo, chief of Italy's Naval Intelligence, assigned a Dutch-American renegade to discover what made England's radar so superior, to steal Samson's secret. In defense, it had won the Battle of Britain against Goering's bomber fleet. And now it was proving worrisome as an offensive weapon at sea.

In November, 1940, the Italian fleet had been grievously assaulted in its anchorage at Taranto, where night's darkness had been no security whatsoever. And that had been only the beginning of this clairvoyant business.

"Only a few days ago," Ponzo mourned, "one of our ships was sunk by a British surface vessel. Neither could see the other—and yet ours was hit and sunk."

And there was Britain's crowing over the very recent battle of Cape Matapan. Another night massacre of the duck-like Italians. Just Churchill's boasting, said the Rome communiqué. But Ponzo knew better. He knew that two destroyers and three cruisers had been tracked down and sunk in the darkness of the Ionian Sea.

The spy spent more than three years on his mission and got nowhere —except into the hands of the FBI. It was hardly surprising. Radar was "Most Secret" with the British, "Top Secret" with us. Much more important, it was a highly technical product of engineering research wired together with skeins of "pure science." Instead of the usual trinkets of secrecy, here was the closed door of higher electronics, with its bewildering cabalism and evasive know-how.

The Axis' best chance to penetrate the veil was to capture actual radar apparatus. Sometimes an Allied plane could be brought down with its radar intact and turned over to eager enemy Intelligence. But when there is no trim secret that can be tucked into a capsule, when all the belligerents have better or worse radar, there is a drawback in this steal-the-enemy's-thunder approach. The thief remains a vital step behind. He captures the model that was in production a year ago. A newer model is now in production, and a still newer one is leaving the test laboratory.

So it was with radar. The Axis could never catch up. It was using a radar blunderbuss when England had a shotgun. When it reached the shotgun phase, English scientists had brought out a model with the

precision of a rifle. A group of American scientists who went to Japan after V-J Day found that enemy had been about three years behind all the way.

Obviously, the enemy's best chance would be to convert a scientist into a spy, rather than hope to teach higher physics to a professional spy. It would have been a real coup had Germany been able to seduce a British or American scientist, or smuggle a Nazi one into what became the nerve center of Allied radar research, the Radiation Laboratory at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. But it didn't happen. Spies find it possible to infiltrate into uniform and into war plants. In the past war, Heinrich Himmler was unaware that he was chatting with Allied agents, just as in the previous one, the Kaiser's generals didn't know that a Britisher was on their General Staff—in Intelligence, no less. And our FBI dug up similar betrayers in our own military midst. But it is apparently much easier to pose as a military man than as a scientist. And as for using genuine ones, they just don't seem to have espionage in their makeup. There was only one notable success of this kind during the war, its later days. Some Canadian researchers turned a variety of technical secrets, concerning uranium, radar, the proximity fuse, "Asdic," over to Russian agents. But this was a better example of the weirdness of the times than of standard espionage, because Russia was an ally from whom secrets were being kept, not an enemy in the usual sense of the word. Referring to the subsequently arrested principals, the investigating Royal Commission lists its facts and concludes: "The evidence is overwhelming . . . that their original motivation was a product of their political ideology. . . ." The culprits had adopted the risky thesis that two wrongs can make a right—and clandestinely slipped data, as well as a sample of Uranium 235, to the Soviet ally.

At any rate, there is no such thing as a totally secret weapon, popped at the foe without his having some inkling of its real or potential existence. The payoff is in weapon superiority more than weapon secrecy. Every major belligerent adapted the rocket to war use. Germany simply was busier, went farther, in developing it. Between Hitler's secret-weapon boasting, the Pennemuende reports from British spies and the aerial-espionage photographs which backed them up, England had more than a year's notice that the V-2 was coming. She bombed out all the launching

sites she could, and braced herself to stand up under a terror weapon—not a secret one.

But there is one type of secrecy, if we may call it that, which has played a great role, which does shape the outcome of wars being fought and wars to come. It doesn't have the trappings of Hollywood mystery but it does conceal with vast effectiveness. It is the secrecy of that which isn't understood. Its veil is that of ignorance.

There are military leaders who can hold their own in discussing the difference between tactics and strategy. They have their full share of integrity, courage. But they cannot fathom the rocket and, most certainly, cannot account for the bursting of the atom bomb. When this is combined with the standpat stupidity of a Colonel Blimp, and with a normal amount of ever-present snafu, we have ingredients for a dish of complete fiasco.

Now that we have reached atom belligerency and are promised germ warfare too, let us recall another "inhuman" weapon. Poison gas is recorded as a secret weapon which the Kaiser's warriors used perfidiously. Perfidious without doubt, but not so secret. To be sure, it achieved a tactical surprise; but so would a band of infantry attacking an unguarded sector.

The first gas, chlorine, was used at Yyres in 1915. But as far back as the Hague Conference of 1899, gas had been anticipated, excoriated, and banned by twenty-seven signatory nations. So that the "secret" weapon was only a forbidden one.

What's more, the British military hierarchy, without bothering to consult scientific men, simply knew that gas couldn't work and, when their Intelligence officers, after grilling German prisoners, declared that gas was coming, laid the reports away in the dusty limbo of unheeded warnings—the same limbo now stacked high with documents labelled "Pearl Harbor."

Significantly enough, the German hierarchy wasn't much smarter. Its scientists had recommended that the surprise attack be on a grand scale, or not made at all. But it ended up as an illy-planned, illy-executed wave of chlorine from stationary cylinders instead of exploding shells. The result was a minor victory instead of a major break-through to the English Channel. By the time the General Staff decided it had something good, the element of surprise no longer existed. The Allies were using

masks; their own "back-room boys" were ready with more and better gas.

It is this—the difficulty in teaming a plodding general with a fancy-free scientist—which must be remembered constantly. The general relies upon the *status quo,* with secrecy to be its sentry. The scientist is too busy leaving the *status quo* behind to place it under guard. On the one hand there is the equanimity of Blimp and the "insect authority" which drove Billy Mitchell into open rebellion. On the other, there is an impatience with "impregnable" bases, with stolid distinctions between offense and defense, with the secrecy of stupidity; science cannot comprehend a naiveté believing that, with our atom bomb, we are secure forevermore, that foreign science and ours can be frozen at any point like a ceiling price, that to the victor belongs the *status quo* and the captured Maginot Line.

This military stolidity breeds defeat and it smothers the victors. Only the earthquake of defeat can shake it. The Allies sat serenely after World War I, while a beaten Germany busily built a modern air force and mercurial tank army. There was Dunkirk. Flushed with the certainty of victory, the Nazis neglected research while stern necessity stimulated the Allies to seek atomic gunpowder and foolproof radar.

The war's end saw a returning paralysis of our military research. Disgusted scientists began returning to a free life, leaving to the generals their battleflags and atom bombs, Nagasaki-style. It remains now to be seen how intelligently the armed services will spend the astronomic funds they have been given for research, how well they will co-operate with the universities and the President's Atomic Energy Commission, and whether they will end unhealthy rivalries between each other. Snafu has already blanketed plans to build up an independent and alert secret service, which was to be a peacetime version of the Office of Strategic Services and keep us informed on what the others are doing.

During the war, British Field Marshal Sir John Dill was frank enough to admit that electronics saved England: "The great invention, which we now call radar, we owed to the university-trained men, and we owed it not only to their brains but to their hands."

But memories become atrophied in times of so-called peace. We recently heard a Chairman Andrew May of the House Military Affairs Committee simplifying the atom-research issue:

"It is a matter of whether we want to let the War Department, which always has been our defense agency, handle this new power, or turn it over to the professors. Personally, I'm for the War Department."

Congressman May was forgetting, or hadn't heard how the present-minded professors spent twenty-one months overcoming military paralysis before they could get their atom bomb research even started. It took seven months, and going outside of channels directly to President Roosevelt with alarms that Germany was already exploring uranium's potentialities, before the Army and Navy would even listen to atomic talk; and another fourteen months elapsed before remaining snafus were passed. On December 6, 1941, on the eve of another memorable date, our scientists were finally authorized to go "all-out" on the epochal project.

But we mention the much-discussed bomb only in passing. Radar is as good an example for any discussion of the meaning and role of weapon secrecy.

Its basic principles were no secret as far back as the 1920's. The first clue was discovered in the disarmament year of 1922 by Dr. Albert Taylor and Leo Young, civilian experts in electronics at our Naval Research Laboratory in Washington. Eight years later, the Navy decided to set up a casual project looking into the possibility of detecting planes and ships; another eight years passed before the first experimental set was tried aboard a battleship. By this time, our initial advantage was long lost. Other nations had borrowed our clues and even steamed past us. (The "echo superiority" with which we ended the war and which created a great new postwar industry that was given its suckling by nearly three billion dollars worth of radar equipment sold for military purposes should, in all fairness, be credited to the know-how we obtained from England, plus research by our own technicians when they were finally turned loose on the assignment, plus that common denominator underlying all of our military successes—our unrivalled production facilities.)

The laggard radar pace we maintained for so many years gives cause for reflection. Our scientists and inventors have always been smart and alert. In the international exchange of theory and fact which underlies all scientific progress, they have given at least as much as they took. In fact, combining forces with refugee scientists who came to us, they established a near-monopoly over the atom bomb. Nevertheless, at one time or another, they fell behind in the development of the bomb, radar,

rockets, robots and the like, simply because necessity remains the mother of invention and their military supervisors could not see the necessity. Truly a fortunate land.

Radar certainly began as our baby. In 1922, it was already known that mountains and other large objects could distort radio signals. But Taylor and Young discovered that a small, moving object—a wooden ship on the Potomac—could be similarly troublesome. Taylor was on one shore of the river, transmitting to Young on the other, And, putting it simply, the ship got in the way. Its presence had been "detected" by radio.

In "pure science" research three years later, echo experiments were conducted by two Carnegie Institution men who later became important in developing The Bomb, Drs. George Breit and Merle Tuve. Their 1925 project concerned the ionosphere, proving its existence and measuring its distance from the earth's surface. This they did by beaming pulses of radio energy upward to that overhanging blanket and noting the time it took for the pulses to bounce back. Since radio's pulses move at 186,000 miles per second, it was easy to calculate the ionosphere's distance.

Thus, at our nation's capital, were developed the two and two which equalled four—radar, whose full name is Radio Detection and Ranging, whose echo locates the invisible. Our Navy, like others, was already using the rebounding *sound* wave to detect submarines. But it couldn't get excited over prospects of doing likewise, in a greater and far more vital field, with *radio* waves. It just couldn't comprehend.

England's situation was a little different. She, too, had her scientists and her Colonel Blimps. But she also had dire necessity. Deserved tribute has been paid to her Robert Alexander Watson-Watt, who was a fine scientist, and a persuasive lobbyist too. In 1936, working through Britain's new Committee for the Scientific Survey of Air Defenses, he won a five-million-pound appropriation for erecting a coastal radar-warning network, just in case enemy bombers would come. That's how it started. German spies sent the word to Berlin, where it was duly noted. Germany was working on radar, too. So was everybody else, including the United States. But nobody worked as hard as those frightened Englishmen.

Back across the Atlantic came the idea that this might be more than a tricky gadget. Our Navy tested a primitive version on a destroyer in 1937. The next year saw the battleship test and there was talk of some day wiring the Panama Canal for radar.

How secret was all this? It is a common belief among military chieftains that one trouble with scientists is that they blab too much. Yet, in May, 1940, when the European blitz was on and the buttoned lip should have been in order, General George C. Marshall and his war plans chief, Brigadier-General George V. Strong (later in charge of super-secret G-2), talked radar to Congressional committeemen. For "security reasons," they didn't go into highly technical details which neither they, the Congressmen, nor the newspaper reporters could have understood anyway. But they told enough to make their subsequent top-secret radar policies rather ludicrous.

Reporters were able to write about a highly secret, supersensitive plane detector which could pierce all fog and darkness, which was far superior to those large amplifying horns used to pick up the sound of approaching planes. The generals were asking for six million dollars with which to build a radar network. The detector had been developed at the Signal Corps Laboratory at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey, during the previous two years and had recently undergone highly gratifying field tests.

Unfortunately for an American renegade named Gunther Rumrich, he had tried to get just such information—and gone to prison as a Nazi spy. The Associated Press dispatch continued:

"Proposing to manufacture forty detectors, costing $54,700 each at the outset, the Army would install them in six warning stations on the Atlantic Coast, one in the Gulf and three on the Pacific, and others in Hawaii, Alaska, Puerto Rico and the Canal Zone. In addition, four mobile companies would be equipped to set up five stations wherever they might be needed on short notice. . . ."

America was not yet in the war, but not far from it. Only a month later, General Walter Short's predecessor at Hawaii put his forces on an all-out alert with live ammunition because France had fallen and the Japanese fleet had gone into radio silence, and our Intelligence logically feared the worst. Yet here was publication of our Army's radar program —neither adequate nor secret.

In August and September of that same year, radar saved England. A chain of warning installations picked up Luftwaffe bombers as they rose from the Continent and trailed them all the way. The RAF could use its desperately few fighter planes exactly when and where they were

needed. To be sure, this was relatively primitive radar. It couldn't "finger" low-flying planes. The stations themselves were conspicuous, high-towered affairs. Had they been bombed out first, the Luftwaffe would have had fine sailing to its targets. But Nazi spies weren't students of electronics, they were better fitted to report on ship movements and arsenal locations. When the Nazi bombers switched to night bombing, England's defense remained a step ahead—this time with night fighters equipped with flying radar. (American newspaper readers thought the miraculous defense was all due to the cat-like eyes which RAF pilots developed by eating lots of carrots.)

That wasn't radar's last role as savior. It helped America's blasted fleet stay alive and aggressive after Pearl Harbor. It broke the back of Hitler's all-out U-boat war in 1943. And as the tide changed, radar turned offensive. It wrecked the Japanese fleet, guided our bombers and their bombs to targets, practically ran the show on D-Day.

Even in her September, 1940, month of travail, London felt there would always be an England—but wasn't quite sure just how that would be managed. She sent a delegation of scientists to America in that month, to swap know-how with us—just in case the United States became the last embattled island. Much of the interchange concerned atomic research, and English confidence that The Bomb could be made somehow impressed our still skeptical military leaders.

From the University of Birmingham came Professor M. L. E. Oliphant with much about the atom, and also with his newly invented magnetron tube which enabled radar to go into microwaves. Radar had been full of technical bugs; now it could be made into a precision instrument. With this new development as an inheritance, the Radiation Laboratory at Massachusetts Institute of Technology went on to evolve new models and supply blueprints to American production lines.

How secret was all this? The magnetron itself was very secret. Its technical details would have been worth a king's ransom to Hitler. But radar itself wasn't secret, and couldn't be, any more than the existence of planes or ships could be secret. But our War and Navy Departments had by now become enamored of the words, "top secret." They shushed radar out of existence. It wasn't easy, with civilian censorship not yet installed.

They were anguished on June 8, 1941, when the Associated Press carried a Detroit interview with Charles Kettering, the famed "Boss Kett"

of General Motors research. Perfectly aware that a war was going on abroad, aware also that know-how is the only secrecy worth protecting, Kettering gave inspiring words—flatly contradicting our military leaders' pessimistic estimates of England's chances. He revealed that radio-detection methods had licked Goering's bombers and would conquer the submarines too.

As for England, she was too busy fighting a war to play silly hush-hush games. Nine days later, she appealed through American newspaper dispatches for American technicians to come over and work in her radio-locator plants. Lord Beaverbrook, Minister of State, went on the air with the same appeal.

America's military chiefs were by now thoroughly infected with the secrecy virus. They talked not; neither did they read. A week before Pearl Harbor, Hawaiian newspapers were screaming of coming war with Japan. Stories that radar had saved England meant as little.

To be sure, we know now that radar was on their minds at times. General Short was a busy writer of letters and directives. So was General Marshall. They agreed that Hawaii should be wired for radar, said so in the course of their pathetic correspondence. And that's about as far as it went. The whys and wherefores of the resulting debacle would require an encyclopedia-long treatise on snafu. . . .

Nineteen years after our scientists hit on the radar principle, sixteen months after it saved England from air attack, an American private stationed in Oahu was teaching another, after hours, how to operate a strange new gadget. In the words of the Army Pearl Harbor Board:

> While Private Lockard was adjusting the machine . . . he observed on the radar screen an unusual formation he had never seen. He thought there was something wrong with it, as the indicator showed such a large number of planes coming in that he was sure that there was nothing like it in the air, and there must be a machine error. He continued to check, however, and finally concluded that the machine was operating correctly and that there was a considerable number of planes 132 miles away from the island approaching from a direction 3 degrees east of north. The time was 7:02 a.m., December 7, 1941. . . .

The rest of the story is gruesome. The privates cried "wolf" and were told to forget it.

What interests us here is that after all those years and those months, Hawaii had only a half dozen radar sets operating, mobile ones, used only

for "training" purposes. Generals Marshall, Short and a good many others knew that radar existed. So did the Japanese. Only the bulk of the American public were kept from knowing the score. We can only conjecture: had radar been discussed more freely, what might have been the result? In exposing the situation, a rampant journalist or Congressional committee wouldn't have given the Japanese what they didn't already know, and would have placed stimulating ants in our military pants.

It has been remarked concerning the late war, that we won but haven't yet found out just how. The score is coming in all the time. We are learning that we won with officers and enlisted men who didn't belong to the military hierarchy, with the war plants and the laboratories which paced them.

The Germans made the woeful mistake of considering their own research so advanced in 1940 that they could concentrate on producing from existing blueprints. As a result, their atomic research got nowhere, their V-1 and V-2 terror weapons came too late, they were always a full lap behind with radar. And when a German test pilot escaped to Sweden in 1944 with his radar-equipped plane, the equipment was interesting to our agents but not worth studying.

The tide had turned. In defense radar, the Allies had acquired superiority the hard way. Some German atom scientists were switched over to radar defense—it was "too little and too late." From our Radiation Laboratory was coming a constant stream of new tricks to paralyze the enemy's radar warning system—jamming it with radio interference at the right frequencies, hoodwinking it with clouds of fluttering aluminum foil cut into the appropriate lengths to produce radar echoes from the fluttering foil instead of the bombers dropping the stuff. Actually, both sides had known of this "window" principle as far back as 1939 but each feared to use it and thereby tip off the opponent. The British were first to use it in their big raids on Hamburg in 1943. As a result, Hitler posted a 700,000-marks reward for the German producing a countermeasure. A betrayer got the one-million-mark reward for turning in Karl Koerdeler, political head of the abortive 1944 assassination plot against Hitler; the radar award was never claimed.

Meanwhile, it was dawning upon our military leaders that the word *radar* might simply have to go into the dictionary. It was being heard all over the place, like an intriguing naughty word, particularly during the

spring of 1943 when the first fifty of a new-type radar set were credited with winning the Battle of the Atlantic by bringing about the sinking of over one hundred U-boats.

So there was a brief secrecy letup in May when Army-Navy heads took a deep draught of confidence and issued a joint statement that a marvelous gadget called radar did exist. But the secrecy took a long time a-dying.

As a war correspondent, I had just flown on a bomber mission in which our fliers were assigned to knock out Jap radar installations on Kiska. Censors, however, demanded the enigmatic approach; my dispatch had to refer to "delicate instruments which warned the Japanese of ships or planes approaching."

A Sunday Magazine writer for *The New York Times* digested this and explained, "That the Japs are also using some form of radar apparatus was implied by a very recent dispatch from an advanced Army base in the Aleutians . . ."—he then went on to quote my so-secret words.

Six months later, my book on the Alaska-Aleutian campaign was submitted to Army-Navy censorship and underwent a security combing that took four months. Many delicate matters of secrecy had to be considered. For instance, my statement that the Aleutians campaign, throughout most of its length, was "primarily an Army air war." Navy reviewers at Pearl Harbor deleted the sentence. Navy at Washington restored it without the word "Army" so that it remained "primarily an air war." The War Department censored it last and restored the statement in its entirety.

And my every word about radar was stricken out—to be restored only when I submitted newspaper advertisements calling for *radar* workers to take jobs in *radar* plants.

And finally it came to pass that the word could be spoken without glancing nervously under the bed or coyly at the censor. At Potsdam, President Truman authorized lifting the veil. The word was fully legitimized on August 14, 1945.

A few months later, there was furor again—this time in Congress. Civilian departments were being accused of approving the sale of radar equipment to the Soviet. The hubbub continued until it was revealed that this was material "declassified" out of secrecy by Army and Navy; moreover, it had long been reaching Russia through Lend-Lease.

A few conclusions stand out, and understanding them requires the realization that push-button warfare has arrived. The old-time spy could pick a lock, but it's far harder to pick the mind of a scientist. The intricate nature of the new gadgets gives them a protective coating of secrecy.

Also, hidebound ideas of defense shielded by secrecy must go out the window. Every expert with any real knowledge of the subject starts his thinking with the atom bomb and its carrier rocket which can't be stopped from coming over by interceptor-radar methods.

After this, there is a branching off into two camps—those wanting to share our knowledge with others so that suspicions won't breed war; those preaching the concept that offense is the best defense. In other words, be prepared to blitz the enemy's A-bomb facilities before he blitzes ours.

It would seem, in the meantime, that scientists should go free because only they, not the ordnance men, seem to know what the weapons business is all about. And they just don't produce with Espionage Acts threats hanging over their heads.

They have shown that they know what to do when secrecy really matters. There was no mystery in the 1930's concerning the various steps leading to the splitting of uranium, climaxed with newspaper accounts in early 1939 that it had been accomplished, predicting a chain reaction, atomic gunpowder and all the rest. In fact, there ensued so much atomic publicity that the native and refugee atomic scientists in our country banded together in the spring of 1939 to censor their own research reports —this was while they were still striving to secure audience with our military chieftains. The "professors" were far more aware than the military that this was a world of harsh reality inhabited by men like Hitler.

Until we have peace guarantees, we should have an alert Intelligence, untrammeled by snafu and plain dumbness, which will learn what the others are doing. We should have more information for public and Congress, so that we can know the realities of a war-jittery world, realize what offense and defense potentials we have, whether we are talking loudly when we carry only a small stick. And there should be that long-needed deforestation program—a cleaning out of military deadwood which lives in yesterday when it should be preparing for tomorrow, which doesn't know much and fondly hopes it can face an enemy knowing less

CONTROL OF ATOMIC ENERGY BY THE UNITED NATIONS

By EMILE BENOIT-SMULLYAN

STALIN'S RECENT STATEMENT minimizing the effect of the atomic bomb is generally thought to have been intended primarily for home consumption. Despite the unwillingness of our military authorities to release detailed information about the actual destructiveness of atomic bombs, Stalin must know at least that: (1) Even the crude atomic bomb so far used can thoroughly devastate an urban area of several square miles; (2) Thousands of such bombs can be produced, probably at a cost of between one and two million dollars apiece; (3) No effective defense against them exists or can even be imagined. Mr. Baruch was not exaggerating when he opened the first session of the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission with the now famous words: "We are here to make a choice between the quick and the dead. . . . We must elect World Peace or World Destruction."

The Russian "plan" for controlling atomic weapons, originally presented by Mr. Gromyko, and later repeated by Mr. Molotov, can only be interpreted as a counterproposal for the record, as Henry Wallace has shrewdly observed. It is almost impossible to take it seriously. The Russians have pretended to view the bomb as a morally repugnant curiosity of secondary military importance which ought to be banned simply on humanitarian grounds. They have therefore repeatedly proposed the prompt destruction of existing bombs, and the cessation of further production. By way of immediate enforcement, they suggest only that each nation shall pass laws against the production, possession, or use of atomic weapons by its own citizens. (As if individual citizens are likely to make atomic bombs without connivance of their government!) They propose that a committee shall later be appointed to find and recommend methods of preventing and punishing violations of the atomic energy agreements; they insist, however, that Russia shall retain the right to veto the adoption of any method it does not like. They have already indicated that they would not favor the establishment of an international Atomic Develop-

ment Authority, and, until Mr. Molotov's speech of November 28, refused to concede, even in principle, the need for international inspection. What the Russian plan really boils down to, then, is a proposal that the United States should strip itself of atomic bombs while Russia is finding out how to make them herself, and that Russia should remain free to veto any particular methods proposed by other nations for discovering and preventing atomic armament in Russia.

With a proposal of this sort no compromise is possible. Mr. Baruch is clearly right on this point. Atomic disarmament will be wholly illusory if nations retain the right to veto essential measures of inspection. On the other hand it is easy to understand the Russian fear of inspection. The Soviet government places an inordinately high value on secrecy as a factor of military security, and seems to regard Russia as highly vulnerable to fifth column tactics.

Considerations of timing are also important in explaining the Russian resistance. The American plan would require that Russia submit to international inspection and discontinue all attempts to develop atomic weapons in the early stages of the plan, whereas the United States would not surrender its stockpile of atomic bombs until a later stage. At what date that stage might be reached, or how the various stages would be identified, and by whom, Mr. Baruch has not said, although he has corrected Mr. Wallace's pardonable impression that the plan would permit the United States to retain unfettered discretion in this matter. However, the stage at which we would have to give up our bombs would undoubtedly take a good many years to reach—especially in view of the extraordinary technical and political difficulties of establishing the Atomic Development Authority, and installing a workable system of inspection and other safeguards in all major countries. It would seem likely, therefore, that the United States could maintain an effective monopoly in atomic bombs for a longer period under this program than it could under an unrestricted armaments race. The Russians, on their side, realize that if they can keep a free hand, and preserve their secrecy, we will not know after a very few years whether they have atomic bombs or not, and this uncertainty on our part will greatly strengthen their bargaining position.

Underlying the impasse in Soviet-American negotiations on the atomic bomb is distrust. Here, Mr. Wallace's view is entirely correct. But this distrust is only in part a result of historical factors. Rivals must always

be distrustful where there is no rule of enforceable law to hold parties to their promises, and where there is no assurance against war. As Mr. Baruch very frankly admitted: "Before a country is ready to relinquish any winning weapons, it must have more than words to reassure it. It must have a guarantee of safety, not only against the offenders in the atomic area, but against the illegal users of other weapons (bacteriological, biological, gas) and perhaps—why not?—against war itself." In this remarkable statement Mr. Baruch appears to be saying that the United States will *not* give up the atomic bomb until it has a guarantee against bacteriological and chemical as well as atomic weapons, and that perhaps the United States will not give up the atomic bomb unless it has a guarantee that war will not occur at all.

In this connection, we should be clear that there is no relatively simple method of controlling bacteriological and chemical weapons. For example, the toxin recently announced by our chemical warfare division, one ounce of which can kill 180,000,000 people, could be produced, it is said, in a slightly reconstructed brewery. It is apparent that effective control of such weapons would require the internationalization of a large part of scientific research, and the inspection by international agents of almost any industrial, commercial, scientific or military site which they suspected of housing unlicensed research or illegal weapons. This would involve an amount of snooping that would make it virtually impossible to retain any important military secrets at all, an amount of snooping that no nation would willingly permit unless it had some assurance that a major war would not be allowed to occur. So once again we return to Mr. Baruch's conception of "A guarantee . . . perhaps—why not?—against war itself."

But what is the meaning of a guarantee against war, how is it possible, and what would it involve? Mr. Baruch, who had to remain within the terms of reference of the Atomic Energy Commission, apparently did not feel free to tell all that was in his mind. He does give us two important hints, however. He emphasizes that immediate and certain penalties must be imposed for "violations of the rules of control which are to be stigmatized as international crimes." The Great Power veto in the Security Council must not be able to prevent or delay the application of sanctions to violators of the law. He also tells us, "And, too, the United Nations can prescribe individual responsibility and punishment on the principles

applied to Nuremberg . . . a formula certain to benefit the world's future." These hints deserve to be pondered.

Let us consider the matter of the veto first. Mr. Baruch takes some pains to explain that he is not condemning the veto power in general. "I want to make it very plain," he says, "that I am concerned here with the veto power only as it affects this particular problem. There must be no veto to protect those who violate their solemn agreements. . . ." In short the veto must not be able to block summary action by the appropriate executive agency in enforcing the rules and, if need be, in punishing the transgressors. To many persons this has appeared self-contradictory. "How," they ask, "can the veto power be maintained if it can not be used to prevent the application of sanctions?" I believe it is possible to make good sense out of Mr. Baruch's hint, if we use a little imagination.

What Mr. Baruch is proposing is a perfectly appropriate separation between the executive and legislative powers. The agency responsible for enforcing the rules against certain armaments (and "perhaps—why not? —against war itself") must be an executive agency with regular executive powers. The veto, on the other hand, is appropriate only within the legislative sphere, and the legislature must not be permitted to impede the execution of the laws. It makes little sense under any system of government to take a vote every time a law is broken to see whether or not it should be enforced. On the other hand, a purely legislative veto, while it may delay needed legislation, does not necessarily make a government unworkable. (In a disguised form we have an approximation to the veto power in our own Congress in the right of unlimited debate or filibuster in the Senate, which often enables a single state or small group of states to block the will of the majority.) The Great Power Veto could usefully be retained in the Security Council if the Security Council became a purely legislative body (functioning, perhaps, as the upper house of the world legislature, with the General Assembly functioning as the lower house). The veto would then apply to any changes in the basic rules originally agreed to by all. It would provide a continuing guarantee that national autonomy could not be infringed by further expansion in the powers of the international organization. It could *not* be used to determine whether the law had been broken, or whether and how it should be enforced.

It is entirely unrealistic, however, to suppose that the Great Powers will ever consent to the necessary abridgment of the veto power as long as the Security Council combines in itself the triple function of lawgiver, judge, and policeman. Their hesitancy is entirely understandable. No Great Power wishes to entrust its most vital interests, possibly its freedom and its survival, to the hazards of a vote *by other national governments* who are its rivals and its potential or actual enemies. No nation can seriously pretend to pass objective judgment on another whose relative strength or weakness is a major factor in its own security.

The only chance of getting the Great Powers to surrender their present veto over the actual enforcement of the law is to establish, within the United Nations, entirely new and separate judicial and executive bodies that can be trusted to perform their functions in an objective and impartial manner. This can happen only if these agencies are wholly independent of existing national governments. Their members must be persons whose records show freedom from nationalistic bias and who are willing to assume an exclusive allegiance to the constitution of the world organization, i.e., to become world citizens. Mr. Baruch may perhaps have had some such thought in the back of his mind when he advocated that, "The personnel of the authority should be recruited on a basis of proven competence, but also so far as possible on an international basis."

Another extremely important consideration emerges as soon as we begin to think seriously about what is involved in Mr. Baruch's request for "an international law with teeth in it," and for "penalties of as serious a nature as the nations may wish and as immediate and certain in their execution as possible." The fact is that the mere elimination of the veto will not in itself make it possible to enforce the law. "Immediate" and "certain" penalties can not be applied unless the executive has the *physical force* as well as the *legal right* to apply them. The executive must therefore possess military and naval forces that are overwhelmingly strong as compared to those available to national governments. Otherwise its edicts, whether vetoed or not, will be calmly ignored by any great power that does not like them; and any penalties it prescribes, far from being "immediate" and "certain" will be enforceable, if at all, only by plunging mankind into the unutterable horrors of another world war.

This brings us back to the second of Mr. Baruch's main hints, the hint concerning the power of the United Nations to punish individuals

on the principle of the Nuremberg trials. Now the obvious defect of this principle as applied at Nuremberg is that it was only after several million more or less innocent people were killed that the guilty people could even be put on trial. It is also a sobering thought that had the Axis won the war an entirely different set of "war criminals" would have been placed on trial. If the "Nuremberg principle" is to assure justice and at the same time be practically useful, the United Nations must be given the power to put suspected war criminals on trial without first having to plunge the world into war to get hold of them. Again what this seems to imply is an armed force within the executive branch of the supranational authority which would be so much more powerful than any national armies that armed resistance would be out of the question. It also implies the definite acceptance by national governments of the legal right of the world court to summon their officials for interrogation or trial whenever there is suspicion that the laws against heavy armaments and war are being violated.

It appears, then, that Mr. Baruch has made two extremely important contributions in his remarkable and paradoxical statement. In the first place, even as he presented a proposal limited to the control of atomic energy, he implied that such a proposal was both impracticable and inadequate: impracticable because we would not in fact surrender atomic weapons unless we had some assurance that we would not need them (i.e., that war would not occur); and inadequate, because even if all nations did surrender atomic weapons they would quickly recreate them and use them as soon as another war started. In the second place, he has given us some valuable indications of the type of changes that would have to be made in the United Nations in order to transform it into an organization capable of preventing war and hence capable of controlling atomic energy. The sort of change implied in his recommendations would not produce the all-out, extreme sort of world government considered by many people as the ultimately desirable goal. It involves no "Parliament of Man," representing all peoples on the basis of population, and other factors of national importance, and legislating freely on any object of common interest. But it does point the way to what may be called "minimal world government," world government with just sufficient powers to regulate heavy armaments and prevent war.

To be sure, there are real difficulties in achieving even this minimum of world government required to prevent war. First and foremost is the educational problem of awakening the world's peoples to the full extent of their danger and—what may be even more difficult—of making them realize that their danger arises not from the peculiar wickedness of foreign nations but from the defects in their own political institutions which perpetuate anarchy in international relations. Besides this, however, there are also a number of important organizational problems. For example, a system must be worked out for selecting personnel in the executive and judicial branches of the world organization whom all nations can trust. Also, methods must be developed for the division and limitation of powers, and for the intensive use of publicity, in such fashion as to assure that the great centralization of physical force does not give rise to tyranny. These problems are by no means insoluble, but much hard thinking has yet to be done to provide solutions that are politically acceptable as well as technically adequate.[1]

The American people are ready to meet this challenge. Recent public opinion polls show a definite majority favoring the transformation of the UN into a limited world government able to enforce peace.[2] Organizations like Americans United for World Government, World Federalists, and Student Federalists are striving to make this body of opinion articulate and politically effective. Britain, France, and China have shown themselves entirely willing to accept the limitation of sovereignty required for minimal world government. As for Russia, her unwillingness to accept proposals which offer her no security against war, and which may even appear to make her more vulnerable, should not lead to premature pessimism. Only when the noncommunist nations of the world offer to give up the power to attack Russia, on condition of Russia giving up the power to attack them, will we have an acid test of Soviet intentions. There is no way to make this offer short of a proposal for minimal world government.

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[1]Suggestions for general solutions to some of these problems are contained in the author's article "An American Foreign Policy for Survival" in *Ethics*, July, 1946.

[2]Thus in a recent Gallup poll 54 per cent of the respondents answered "yes" when asked: "Do you think the United Nations Organization should be strengthened to make it a world government with power to control the armed forces of all Nations including the United States?" Only 24 per cent said "no," and 22 per cent had no opinion.

MURDER IN GRAMERCY PARK

By LOUIS FILLER

A PHOTOGRAPH taken informally of David Graham Phillips in 1908, after he had turned his corner and ranked with the successful novelists of his time, showed his tall, spare form conventionally but somewhat foppishly attired. His handsome features were, as usual, overserious for the moment and his own forty years, and might have seemed even more so had color photography been used. For it was Phillips' habit to wear elegant clothing, less conspicuous than he had worn in younger and brasher years, but still made of cloth ordinarily used by dandies of the period for festive occasions. There was a definite contrast between Phillips' appearance and his manner; and what made the photograph even more striking was the fact that Phillips carried an open umbrella. The photographer was not Steiglitz, and one must assume that there was a threat of rain in the air.

It is evident that there was nothing whatever unusual about Phillips or his appearance. A man enjoys wearing fine clothes, he takes life seriously and therefore looks severe, he is well-to-do but prefers to walk, and he opens his umbrella when rain threatens. The plot is an epitome of the commonplace. Yet there was something about Phillips which confused some of his friends and offended those unsympathetic to his way of life. Why, for example, should a man walk when he can ride? And what kind of pose did one get with an umbrella? Photographs were usually formal affairs, designed to show the subject at what was considered his best. Then, the elaborate wardrobe. And baths three or four and more times a day at a time when it was suspected that baths were not good for the health. Phillips was considered a crank on many topics, and, undoubtedly, he would not let people, and especially friends, go to the devil in their own ways. Senator Albert J. Beveridge, his friend since college days, was the object of his constant solicitude, for Phillips devoutly expected the "people" to make the Indiana statesman president in their own good time, if he but proved true to them. Other friends were to remember Phillips' anxious speeches. Characteristic is the last reminiscence of Anna Strunsky Walling, friend of Jack London, wife of the dis-

tinguished socialist William English Walling. Phillips had accompanied her down to the street from the sumptuous apartment off Gramercy Park in New York which he shared with his sister Mrs. Carolyn Frevert. He stood there at the curb while Mrs. Walling made herself comfortable in her automobile and warned her at length against overindulging in car riding. It would not only separate her, slowly but surely, from the people on the sidewalk, Phillips insisted (he seems to have feared that the automobile was creating a special class of aristocrats), but it would ultimately affect her health.

Phillips took life too seriously, in the opinion of friends and others. Furthermore, he took it seriously in ways which were undesirable. Some of his ideas seemed more appropriate in unshorn socialists than in a well-favored and successful man of letters. Indeed, not a few socialists of the time who held to the inevitability theory—that socialism was bound to come of itself, nothing could stop it—saw no reason for putting themselves out in any way. Phillips himself was inclined to think that socialization of key industries at least was inevitable; but in the meantime he attacked in his magazine articles trusts, trust-makers, and political bosses, with the fury of an Indiana-born son of old-fashioned Americans, who had let Princeton affect the cut of his clothing, but not his democratic heritage.

Phillips' moral earnestness was arresting, but it was his novels which gave him his greatest following—and elicited the sharpest criticism. First, there was his general approach. After fifteen years of journalism in Cincinnati and New York, Phillips had left Pulitzer's employ to enter the free-lance field. It took courage to leave an area of work he had conquered at great pains to himself, and walk a gauntlet of skepticism to the outside. But, as Phillips said, he was confident he would succeed because his friends, being his friends, were so confident he would not. Hence, he was free to write as he pleased, and he would therefore write in a way the general public, the book-buyers, would understand. Phillips went about his business with an energy which, in time, made him a legend. He began with articles, stories, and novels. For a time, he contributed "Topics of the Times" articles to the *New York Times. Collier's, McClure's, Munsey's,* and above all *The Saturday Evening Post* received his "stuff." As *The Critic* noted with amiable surprise, in July, 1903, "Mr. Phillips seems to be an industrious writer, for it is almost impossible

to pick up a magazine or a weekly or even a daily newspaper in which there is not something from his pen."

Early experimental novels (which criticism never distinguished from his more mature work) came quickly and often. Then, in 1905, *The Plum Tree* appeared, a novel of president-making which established that term in our political folklore. The next year the historic *Treason of the Senate* articles, too dangerous for reprint in book form, first evoked the scream of "muckraker!" from Theodore Roosevelt. Phillips now stood in the front line of American writers. For better or worse he was a man to conjure with.

Yet he drifted away from active intervention in national politics, rather than toward it. For Phillips had work to do, and his work was in the novel. *The Second Generation, Light-Fingered Gentry, Old Wives for New, The Fashionable Adventures of Joshua Craig, The Hungry Heart, White Magic, The Husband's Story,* each in turn challenged attention. And while they did, Phillips worked over and over the story he intended to be his masterpiece: *Susan,* he thought of calling it, or perhaps *A Girl of the Streets.*[1] The novels he lived to see in print did not, like *Susan Lenox: Her Fall and Rise* suffer condemnation as "an extremely offensive addition to the literature of pornography," in the words of the *New York Times,* or suppression by the Society for the Suppression of Vice; and perhaps better so. Phillips had, after all, not lived on intimate terms with the demimonde. But what he had to say of the world which he knew with his heart as well as his mind was resented in kind, if not in the same degree. *Old Wives for New,* for example, in part maintained the dangerous thesis that where a wife had changed for the worse, where estrangement was complete, there was no way out but divorce. *The Fashionable Adventures of Joshua Craig* told of a Washington society girl who seemed to look upon marriage as a dilemma, who scrutinized men with doubt and dissatisfaction, and whose affair with a bumptious western politician lacked any trace of what was currently considered romance. *The Hungry Heart* told of another woman, whom Phillips as author apparently respected, who conducted an affair with a man *while still wedded to another.* . . . As a matter of fact, Phillips' heroes and

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[1]Louis Filler, "An American Odyssey: The Story of Susan Lenox," *Accent,* Autumn, 1940.

heroines, if they were that, usually found themselves in situations which would have tried saintlier souls; but one can at least feel the fervor with which a Norma Bright Carson, writing in the *Book News Monthly* for October, 1909, exclaimed.

> With what a sense of refreshment does one turn, therefore, to one of Mrs. Wiggins' books, to one of Margaret Deland's, to something of Hopkinson Smith's, for instance. Here we have life as it ought to be; here are high ideals lived up to; here is sweetness. . . .

It is not wholly fair to call this passage from limbo, but there was little current criticism that was far superior to it. There were American critics of greater capacity, Paul Elmer More for one. But More was not interested in current writing. James Gibbons Huneker was not interested in it unless it came from Europe. H. L. Mencken, in *Smart Set* for January, 1910, wrote on "David Graham Phillips: the Leading American Novelist." But Mencken's career lay with the irresponsibles, and when, some years after, he stood on his head while holding forth once more on Phillips, no one noticed, no one cared. . . .

But was it *art?* Phillips' manner did not help his critics to think well of his work. His repeated statements that he was engaged in a "job," his insistence upon being paid for his labors, his evidently fanatical unwillingness to stop work at any time, were marked against him. Any night at all, friends passing through Gramercy Park could look up and expect to see Phillips' windows alight high up in the modern apartment house in which he lived, and might know that he was standing at the drawing table he had built especially for his work, smoking innumerable cigarettes, and writing, writing, writing. "There's Graham," they would say, "pounding away at his old black pulpit." His desk followed him on shipboard during his many trips to France. He wrote and rewrote in his crabbed script. As a result there was a steady stream of fiction, issued without dedication pages, with no frills and few fancies, to roil the waters of contemporary literature.

"They tell me a chicken sings before it lays an egg," wrote Phillips, in a letter to the editor Bailey Millard. "But not this chicken. I make groaning sounds, no more like a song than the barking of a tonsilitic seal."

Phillips was cantankerous, but he was far from humorless. He read his Zola and Tolstoi and retained his modesty. He was the spokesman for

a business civilization, and if that civilization lacked all validity, then so did his work. But only then. Phillips was no fiction-factory, and no more than anyone else worked "merely for money." When his friend Arthur W. Little, who was to inherit the affluent printing firm of Little & Ives, and who was then conducting *Pearson's Magazine*, was refused a favor by Phillips, a favor which was presented to a competitor, Little wrote Phillips with bitter irony of the advantages a rich magazine enjoyed over a poor one. In return he received the following letter:

> Dear Arthur:
>
> You are mistaken in one respect. If you should fail you would discover that I would not only be a great deal more willing to be seen with you, but that I'd hunt you up and insist on being seen with you. For, then you'd need me, while now you don't. So if you want to see more of me and make use of me, etc., why all you've got to do is to lose your reputation and your money, etc. *Now,* will you be good? Graham

II

Phillips thought of his personal life as his own affair. Not for him the well-publicized exhibitions of a D'Annunzio. There were interviews with correspondents and others, but a Phillips interview tended to become a discussion of ideas, of methods of work, of national and international problems. It was Phillips' contention that these were the important aspects of a man's life. But if Phillips appraised himself in that light, others did not. The fact that he was a bachelor was often noted, and also the fact that he did not present an uninteresting appearance. His persistent habits of work attracted comment. Did he really work *every* night? Phillips attended the opera, the theatre, the concert, this was obvious even from references in his work. What else? He traveled and read voluminously, though his stories did not reflect these activities to any marked degree. What else? There was a definite conviction among readers and critics that the artist must enjoy vast and uncommon experiences to write greatly, and theories about Phillips often verged on the nosey and impertinent, unrelieved by good will, or a genuine interest in or appreciation of his work. Yet Thackeray, and not Dostoevsky, was then the norm of high literature in America. It was not, of course, conceived that the events of the muckraking period of which Phillips was part were uncommon: Tom Lawson's exposures of Amalgamated . . . the fight for pure food . . . for railroad legislation . . . for monopoly control . . . the murder of

Governor Steunenberg of Idaho, and its aftermath . . . the Ballinger case . . . and others.

Phillips was a public figure. The "people" read his work, but there was a price to pay. The *Treason of the Senate* articles called forth opprobrium on the floor of Congress. Phillips himself received letters threatening him with murder. Phillips was hurt by unfair criticism, disturbed by "crank" letters and the general knowledge (shared by other muckrakers) that there were influential people who would rather that he did not write, and who were not queasy about how he might be stopped from writing. But his duty, as he conceived it, was clear; and Phillips went about his work confident of vindication.

Sometime in 1910 there was a scare of crank letters which seemed to stem from a fixed illusion in their writer. The letters were anonymous, the threats pointed. Mrs. Frevert insisted that her brother inform the police, and he did put the matter up to Central Office. Later a police sergeant inquired of Phillips whether anything further had happened.

"Oh, I guess that crank has forgotten all about me," Phillips answered. "I haven't heard from him in months."

III

With January of 1911 the demon of work entered into Phillips anew. Night after night he stood at his tall, black drafting-table and mulled over his stories, articles, dramas and the larger works. A fine frenzy seems to have possessed him. He had decided to release *Susan Lenox* at last, and with that decision it was as if he had released some part of himself. It was his masterpiece, he told his sister; but it was more. It was everything that had motivated him since he had first gone into journalism almost a quarter-century before to learn what it was a novelist ought to know.

The moral passion which Edwin Markham "so keenly felt" in his last talk with Phillips, the latter's feeling that he would write little more fiction, his mounting interest in the drama, and—most significantly—his new interest in science which prompted striking passages in his yet unpublished *The Grain of Dust*—all these factors foretold some radical change that was in operation within him. *The Price She Paid,* and various articles and sketches which had recently engaged him—these were written not with the enthusiasm of youth, but, as it were, in a manner of summation. Other interests beckoned him, a large world for a man full to the brim of love of life and experience, almost ascetic in his devotion to it.

"Everything was finished when Graham went to bed that last morning," his sister said afterwards, "everything to the last sheets of the last short story. For weeks he had been writing with feverish energy, not wasting a day or an hour, as if he knew that his time was short."

Not everything was finished, we know. And yet, perhaps, as Carolyn Frevert willed to believe, everything. . . . As was his habit, Phillips continued to sleep through the small hours and part of the morning, to "breakfast" with Carolyn, and then to walk out upon Nineteenth Street, over to Irving Place, and up the half-block to Gramercy Park, which he circled, passing The Players, and other well-known institutions, on his way to the Princeton Club where he picked up his mail and exchanged helloes with acquaintances.

Phillips had no way of knowing that a young man was living across the way from his apartment house on Nineteenth Street, on the top floor of the Rand School of Social Science; nor of fathoming his reasons for staying there. The young man's room was at the back of the building. He had nothing in particular to do with the socialists, but he was observed to be mildly queer, though apparently good-natured. On pretexts of conversation he often visited those who had front rooms, and would glance across the street. Sometimes he forgot his hosts and stared silently through the window without moving for a long time. The occupants of the rooms thought him a nuisance, but rather harmless.

On Sunday, January 22, at eleven o'clock in the evening, Phillips set himself to a night of work, and it was seven o'clock in the morning when he left his desk. He slept briefly and well, washed, and prepared for the day. He and his sister ate together, and then Phillips remembered to call Charles Frohman to tell him that he had completed three acts of *White Magic,* the play which he was preparing for Billie Burke from his own novel. It was to be Phillips' second play on the boards; *The Worth of a Woman* had shocked opinion a few short years before, had lasted only a few weeks. The spectacle of a woman walking the stage, wronged, and refusing to be righted, had simply been too much for Broadway. This time, perhaps, New York would not be shocked by the morals of an old-fashioned American.

That day Phillips had received another threatening letter, one of a number of similar messages of recent date, reminiscent of those which had disquieted him some months before. Strangely, it was addressed to

him, but signed with his own name. "This is your last day," it read. Such things were never pleasant. Phillips put the letter into his pocket.

At half-past one o'clock Phillips prepared to stop in as usual to the Princeton Club for his mail before visiting his publishers. He placed the manuscript of his story *Enid* inside his breast pocket and stepped out into the brisk, sunny afternoon.

IV

The Princeton Club, which had been Stanford White's home, faced Gramercy Park from the north. Gramercy Park, then as now, was a beautiful square of foliage surrounded by high, exclusive gates. Newton James, a broker, and Frank Davis, a mining engineer, came leisurely out of the club, walking west. They saw Phillips striding toward them, some hundred feet away, and, leaning against the iron railing of the Schuyler Schieffelin home, a man who had been loitering about for some time.

Phillips was approaching them, his fellow club-members had no more than recognized him, when the man beside the fence began to shoot. There were six reports, then they heard the man cry, "There you are! I guess that does for you." Phillips stopped in his tracks, hardly yet realizing pain, perhaps. The stranger turned the gun to his own head, and added, "I'll finish the job now."

He walked to the curb and pulled the trigger, and his body rolled dead into the street.

Only a fraction of time had elapsed. A passerby hurried up to Phillips, who had staggered back to the fence and was trying to keep from falling. "I'm shot," he said, "get a doctor." He turned part way around and looked at the dead man lying face upward in the street. "My God! How could he do it?" he groaned; and then, "How long does it take that doctor to come?"

The man sustained Phillips against the iron railing. Blood was seeping through his clothes and falling. James and Davis ran up.

"Graham," cried Davis, "what has happened?"

"He shot me in the bowels," Phillips articulated. "Never mind him. Get a doctor."

He was now suffering intensely. The three men carried him into the club reception room and laid him upon a rug. . . . Not only in the bowels, but in the chest, and elsewhere. So Phillips waited, in pain, and in gathering rather than lessening consciousness. At last the ambulance from Belle-

vue Hospital swung up. They strapped him into the stretcher and lifted him slowly into the car, and as he was passed in, he whispered to the attendant, "Do not tell my mother. She is old and this will kill her. I am young, and I may live yet."

Somewhere—perhaps in *Victory*—Joseph Conrad tells us that it is only in our moments of crisis that we know what we are. Phillips' were the words of one who had long since made up his mind on the basic questions of the world, life and death, right and wrong. So, wounded, he set a seal of reality to his life work.

For hours the assassin lay on the pavement in the afternoon sun. Later his body was removed to the Morgue.

V

Fitzhugh Coyle Goldsborough was of "good" Washington family. Even as he fired his revolver, his sister was scheduled to marry the United States Consul at Nottingham, England. Goldsborough was thirty-two years old, had attended Harvard, and was a musician. He had been a queer boy, had written good verse, it was said. He was a trained violinist, having studied under excellent teachers in Washington and Vienna. Stories were told of his eccentricities.

He had made no career, achieved no eminence. A dreamer with poetic illusions, he had settled to nothing. He had played in the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, had compelled a colleague to listen to his verse, and forced criticism of it. And not liking the criticism he had in a rage broken the violin over the man's head.

He was a failure, and brooded. He entertained dreams of grandeur and weakly excused his inability to achieve it. Somehow, in the grey fog of his unhappy thoughts, the wraith of Phillips took its place, as prominent men and women figure in the dreams of thousands as friends and lovers. . . . Goldsborough hated Phillips.

But Goldsborough was not merely envious, not merely dissatisfied with his own life and accomplishments. He was sick. Aberration at one point had forced him to spend time in a sanatorium. Not strange that normal impulses became accentuated and realities confused. He too was a great writer, a great man. He studied Phillips' works not as the ordinary reader did, but with every personal reaction. And he dreamed. . . . He

had written that scene, created this character. He *was* the character. . . . Again, Phillips' castigations of weakness and vanity stung him like a lash, the merciless dissections were like personal reproaches, like expressions of a directed contempt. Goldsborough writhed in anguish and humiliation.

He may, also, have seen Phillips in Washington—so it was later alleged. Phillips visited the Capital often. Certainly sight of his independent figure would have fed the maw of Goldsborough's jealousy.

But when Goldsborough read *The Fashionable Adventures of Joshua Craig* something closed in his mind. The book was without the shadow of doubt a personal attack. It was he, Goldsborough, and Goldsborough's family whom this boor was insulting. Phillips had entered the soul of his family and here distorted it and lied about it. . . . The fires of envy and self-disgust leaped skyward, fed by an ever-increasing insanity. It was not Phillips who was the great writer; it was he. Phillips filched his stories, capitalized upon his ideas, and in return mocked and affronted him.

A weak fantasy, George Sylvester Vierick's *House of the Vampire,* was then in vogue. It told of an intellectual vampire who absorbed the genius of all those with whom he came in contact, as Shakespeare or Homer might have done in their own times. This formed the inspiration for what became Goldsborough's one obsession. Phillips was a vampire and he himself was his helpless victim.

This was not to be borne. The wretched man felt himself beset. Fate would not free him. He was no failure, no, not he. Phillips rent him, tore away his strength. In self-defense he wrote threatening letters to Phillips, and even sought out Mayor Gaynor to complain of being annoyed. Strangely, he found occasion to mention, but almost impersonally and without animosity, that Phillips had attacked him in print. And yet not strangely, for a certain cunning protects illusions in the various layers of the human consciousness. The mayor's secretary heard Goldsborough out and noticed nothing suspicious. He suggested that the next time Goldsborough had reason to feel he was being hounded, he might inform the precinct chief. Goldsborough never accepted this suggestion; the police would not understand. Evidently he would have to settle with fate himself. Phillips was becoming bolder and more arrogant.

. . . The evidence of the diary Goldsborough kept is that he believed Phillips to be drawing more and more recklessly upon his mind.

How much of himself was Phillips? Was he Phillips, or Phillips he? Hence the letter he sent the novelist and signed with the latter's name.

In this wise Goldsborough spent the last weeks, meanwhile acquainting himself with Phillips' movements and making his tortured diary in which he included ideas for poems, scraps of verse, notes for short stories —and, above all, notes concerning Phillips, Phillips, Phillips.

VI

At the Bellevue Hospital they prepared Phillips for the operating table, while outside the news swept over the city and was flashed throughout the country. David Graham Phillips had been shot and was fighting for life! Even those who had most disliked his ways and opinions seem to have been momentarily stopped in trying to fathom this thing that had befallen him. Acquaintances like Will Irwin carried the shocking news to acquaintances like Booth Tarkington. Carolyn Frevert was busy in the market place, buying food for a dinner she had scheduled for that evening. At the butcher's she ordered meat.

"You're not having a dinner tonight, Mrs. Frevert," said the butcher gently.

"Oh, yes I am," she answered lightly.

"You're not having a dinner tonight," he repeated. And she looked up and into his eyes, startled. . . . Later, she sat holding her brother's hand in a ward of Bellevue when Arthur Little came. Little found Phillips very pale, very still, "but his eyes flashed recognition, and we all three remained for what seemed a very long time, but which was probably not more than ten minutes, in silence."

At about 5:25 o'clock in the afternoon Phillips went under the knife and for an hour surgeons worked over him, trying to prevent the spread of infection from the wounds in his stomach and chest. At length he was permitted to rest. . . . His brother Harrison Phillips, a journalist, had stepped from a western train to see Phillips and his sister in time to hear the incredible news being shouted in the street. Now Phillips looked up beside his bed and saw his brother miraculously there.

"But how could you have got here in time, Bill?" he murmured.

The surgeons were able to announce that he had stood up to the operation remarkably well, and that he seemed to be in good condition.

We meet the fate that suits our character, according to Aldous Huxley. The metaphysical phrase stands on a base of hard reality. Phillips would have denied it, but here was a fate that had threatened him for years. He had challenged the major tenets of his age, and challenged them on their own terms. Fatuous optimism he had met with forthright courage. He had dared the reader to seek the truth about himself. He had challenged political corruption and industrial inhumanity, yes. But he had also challenged sloth and lies at their source, had stripped the fancy frauds from American fiction. The madman's hatred of Phillips, his need for disposing of him, was deeper than the need of others to stop his revelations of infamy in the Senate, for it was Phillips' character and brains which were unbearable to Goldsborough, and which had to stop. It was not for *The Treason of the Senate* that Phillips was shot, but for the weave of a novel.

The day dragged on. Beveridge was informed of the catastrophe and hurried from Washington, harassed though he was by official business; and when he arrived in New York and was admitted to Phillips' bedside it was to learn with relief that the wounds were under control, and that Phillips would recover. So he left word to be kept informed, and returned to Washington.

Throughout the day of January 24, Phillips moved in pain. His stomach wound troubled him in particular. The anesthesia of the previous day nauseated him now, and he could retain no food. It was a long calvary and Phillips fought unafraid. Life, as he knew, was only a process of development; and he had written that no sensible man ever worries about his own death, for "when I shall die, I will not be here."

Yet life was sweet. He turned his back on death. Up until eight o'clock it seemed that he would live. He asked his sister to distribute available mementoes to friends, if he should fail to recover. He was momentarily amused at the thought that his publishers were acquiring much more publicity than they would voluntarily buy. Then the tide turned. An internal hemorrhage began which could not be controlled.

Phillips became perceptibly weaker, and it became clear that death was imminent. Fully conscious Phillips struggled on, but it was he who finally saw that it was no use and remarked on the futility of hope.

"I could have beaten two bullets," he whispered, "but six were too many."

They had fought a good fight. There was nothing more to do. Phillips remained conscious until twenty-five minutes before the end. After that they waited, his brother and sister and the surgeon, and at 11:07 p.m. he died.

VII

Arthur Brisbane called at the hospital. Robert W. Chambers called. George Horace Lorimer, Samuel Blythe, the magazine writer, and Alfred Henry Lewis, the cowboy chronicler—all called. Arthur Little found a note for him at the hospital, from which Phillips' body had been removed. Beveridge came north in response to Harrison Phillips' telegram to arrange for the funeral.

Phillips was dead; the news was broken. With the quick adjustments of journalism, the papers prepared their obsequies, and then—what more was there to say?

On Friday afternoon services were held in St. George's Church about which, years before, Phillips had written so intelligent and alive a chapter of his private Americana for a magazine. Now he lay there in state, attended by Beveridge and Chambers, by Joseph H. Sears for the publishers, by Arthur Little, and others. The streets outside swarmed with people. Bishop David H. Greer would have liked to officiate, but a train delay prevented him, and as a result (in Little's recollection), "a minister who had never known Graham, or been known by him—a minister without personality, with artificial intonation of delivery—a minister who had read what he had to say and who apparently could not say anything that he could not read, intoned a service which Graham would have hated." Little thought Phillips' sense of humor would have prevailed over his sense of disgust, and he thought Phillips would have liked the ballad the well-known colored baritone Harry Burleigh sang.

There was talk of returning the body to Indiana, but they may have realized the gesture was not appropriate. Phillips had remembered his home town with affection, had, indeed idealized it in his work. But New York—vast, complex, exciting—had given him his best years. It had helped him to find himself, had been his citadel for work. He loved New York.

So they left him nearby, and over his grave they wrote: *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.*

A STORY

UP THE ROAD A PIECE

By RUTH McCOY HARRIS

SOMETHING WAS AILING GRAMPA. Sis could tell it plain as day, but she did not let on. If she let on, Grampa might sit down again. They had to go on, had to get there before dark.

"Where we goan, I reckon they just now gitten up," Sis said, lifting her eyes to the round red sun just showing over the trees. "Reckon they is got on they fine clothes, sitten down in they fine chairs."

"I smells meat fryen," Grampa said. "I smells coffee." He sniffed the air like a bird dog.

"Sho' do smell good, don't it, Grampa? Smell like more."

"Sho' do. Ummp-mmmm!"

"They at a fine table. They got bacon and aigs for breakfast."

"Aigs!"

"Bacon and aigs. Ever' mornen. Two aigs!"

"Now, Sis," Grampa grinned. "You know good and well ain't no niggahs eat no two aigs ever' day."

"Two aigs. Gits in they fine cars and rides around. Has chicken ever' day. And grapes!" Her eyes opened wide at her own extravagance. "Yes, sir. Chicken and dumplen."

"Ummp-ummmph!"

The dust felt soft as kitten fur under Sis's skinny black feet, and the September sun was warm upon her skinny black face, early in the morning as it was. She looked at Grampa and thought how old he was, older than anybody. She thought how it was that Grampa seemed older, every step he took, putting his feet carefully one in front of the other, like sticks of stove wood. Older and younger at the same time. Sis seemed to herself older than Grampa, responsible for him, after the day and night upon the road.

"I'm thirteen," she said aloud. She liked to say it; thirteen was much older than twelve. "I'm goen on fourteen. How old is you, Grampa?"

"I old," Grampa said. "I older than anybody. I so old, they's no tellen." He slowed his steps, almost stopped. "I tired, Sis. Old and tired. I got to take me a little rest."

Sis started praying again. "Lord Jesus, help Grampa," she prayed inside herself. "Something ailen him. Sweet Jesus, help him; he ain't got much farther to go. Help Grampa to git there. We *got* to git there."

She saw a blue jay like a flash of sky, lighting on the limb of a wild plum tree, scolding and fussing at them as they trudged along.

"Lookayondah that old jaybird, Grampa!" Sis said aloud, without stopping her inward prayer. "Sweet good Jesus, help him to keep putten one foot in front the other. You *knows* we near 'bout there," she could not help adding impatiently. "You *knows* us got to git there." She looked slyly at Grampa. "Look at him. Here how he do." Sis imitated the jaybird's noisy scolding, putting her head on one side and making her eyes sharp and mean.

"Here how he go. He go like this. . . . Here how the sweet mocking bird go. He say . . ." and Sis whistled some of the mocking bird's many songs.

"That last ain't no mocking bird. That last a crow."

"This here a mocking bird mocking a crow." Sis laughed, seeing Grampa laugh. They laughed together, free and careless, and each looking at the other would laugh still more. When Grampa laughed, his black face was wiped clean and new. It was like being back at home, safe and happy with Lady.

When they had left, they had simply shut the door behind them. The house was still back there, away back down the road, Sis thought with surprise. If they were back in the little one-room shack, it would be as if they had never left, except that Lady was not there.

After the funeral everything had been too quiet. Sis could not bear to be in the house alone. And Grampa would not come in, even with the dark coming on. Sis tiptoed past the narrow white bed without looking, past the scrubbed pine table where the layer cake and the bottled drinks had been spread. The bare boards creaked and Sis felt death and darkness in the room, felt a hand reaching out toward the back of her neck.

"Grampa!" Sis screamed, and ran out the back door to crouch beside Grampa in his old chair. He held his Bible in his hand, and his old pipe.

Sis could see dimly the scars the gallberry broom had left in the baked earth.

"I here, Sis," Grampa said patiently. "I setten here."

Nothing could induce either of them to go inside, where the sweet rambling roses smelled of the grave and the odorless zinnias stood prim in bottles and jars.

"Niggah buryen make me lonesome," Grampa said impersonally, as if the funeral had not been Lady's, his own granddaughter and this child's mother. "Niggah make too much noise and laughs. Then it so quiet and lonesome."

"Sister? Oh, Sister! Where you all?" The voice, rich and brown and warm, poured through the house and washed away the breath of death. "I declare. Out here in the dark! You all catch malarium. Come on in out the black." Mis' Mott, big and brown, lighted the kerosene lamp. It made a shadow behind the bed. They never expected to go to sleep, but they lay down, the old man on his sagging couch, the child on her pallet, soothed by Mis' Mott's cheerful managing. The black at the window was graying, the lamplight fading when they awoke.

Grampa did not argue when Sis told him. He turned to stare, groping for his old shoes, but he did not argue.

"Lady say us got to go anyhow? Just us?"

"She say go ahead."

"Sudie, too?"

A curtain dropped over the brightness of Sis's eyes. "Not this time, Grampa. Not now." Not ever. Sudie would never go.

Sis could hear Lady saying it. "Sudie ain't worth a chew tobacco. Sudie a no-count niggah. Ever how Sudie do, you do the different. Don't you never let me catch you take after Sudie."

Sudie and her four little blue-eyed children, with their hair too soft and brown and their skin too light. Sudie could never go, but she did not care. She did not feel the thing that Sis felt, the thing driving her on. Lady had talked to Sudie the way she talked later to Sis, but Sudie always laughed and put on her high-heeled shoes and the thick red lipstick and ran out of the house. And now she lived alone, with the four children,

her belly big and heavy again. She was always singing and laughing, laughing at Lady and Sis.

They each took their most valuable possessions, tied in a little bundle. Sis took her red dress and her shoes that were almost new and the little red pocketbook Lady had given her long ago. It was full of pennies, with three nickels like prizes among them. Grampa had his Bible that he could not read.

They passed Mr. Jeff Webb's big white house, sitting back from the road, where Lady had worked. They passed other painted houses behind their dusty evergreen bushes, passed the cotton gin and the planer mill, the courthouse and the stores. After more houses and the filling station came the other edge of town, with its shacks like Lady's, straight up and down boards weathered gray, with cracks between and a chimney made of sticks and mud.

No one was stirring at Sudie's house or at Mis' Mott's. At Aunt Lucy Carter's they had hot corn pone and bacon drippings for breakfast, but ask as she would, Aunt Lucy could get nothing out of them.

"Just a little trip," was all Sis would say. "Just up the road a piece."

"I bet you all going to Hattiesburg," Aunt Lucy said, scandalized, for Lady was not good cold in the ground, but Sis would not say. They left Aunt Lucy standing by the chinaberry tree in her yard. The road stretched like an inviting finger. Sis could hardly stand it, her feet wanted so much to run and skip, but she walked along slowly, the way Grampa had to walk.

"I got to go in the bushes," Grampa said, stopping. Sis crept behind a bush, too, and then waited for Grampa. But when he came back, he sat down. "Got to sit a little," he said. "Old Grampa tired."

They sat down in the shade, for the autumn sun was already merciless. Grampa had drops of perspiration on his forehead, below his kinky white hair. Grampa was a great big tall man, but he was so stooped nobody knew how tall he had once been.

"Time to go now, Grampa?" Sis kept asking, but Grampa would only shake his head drowsily.

It was Mr. Jeff's car that stopped.

"Howdy, Sis. What you waiting here for?"

Sis nodded toward Grampa. "We goan to Hattiesburg. Grampa's tired."

Mr. Jeff laughed. "He got tired mighty quick. You all ain't good started. Get in. I'm going to Hattiesburg."

They got into the back seat of the splendid car and sat on the splendid upholstery. Some folks would spread an old quilt first, but Mr. Jeff would let them get right in. Even if he was the sheriff, Sis was not afraid of him. She sat marvelling at the miles flowing behind them. It was like riding in the golden chariot.

"Where's Lady?" Mr. Jeff asked them, after a while. "Lady never showed up to help Mrs. Webb during court last week."

They could only stare at each other. How could it be that he did not know of the heavy earth and the flowers piled above Lady?

"Mamma daid," Sis's lips trembled to say the words.

"Dead! Well, I'll declare!" Then, "Lady was a good worker. I've heard Mrs. Webb say many's the time, she wouldn't have anybody help her but Lady." It was his tribute, his flowers for the grave, and it brought the tears to Sis's eyes.

At the edge of town, Mr. Jeff parked the car and Sis almost fell out for staring at the piles of vegetables in a store window.

"Look out, girl," Mr. Jeff said sharply. "You'll break your neck." He locked the car. "I'll be going back about sundown," he said.

They did not tell him they would not be going back with him. He would never give it another thought, if he did not find them waiting.

Sis held Grampa's arm, partly to steady him, but mostly to comfort herself. There were people everywhere, soldiers talking Yankee talk and ladies in fine clothes and colored folks like themselves. Grampa, bewildered, bumped into a lady.

"Look out, Uncle," she said good-naturedly, "You're in town now."

Luckily they made no turns. The street led straight through the town and became an open highway again. Sis was empty and thirsty, but she had no idea where to get anything.

"I thirsty," Grampa said. It was the beginning of a refrain. Every time Sis felt joyful and light, thinking of the wonders ahead, Grampa would say it again. Say it or sit down by the road, fanning himself with

his old hat. Once he went to sleep, and Sis, her eyes darting about the scrub oak and pine saplings, saw a grapevine. It had no grapes, but she saw another and another, and finally climbed a tree, her dress falling away from her bare body, and came down with a handful of the sharp little grapes.

"Ummp, ummph! Foxgrapes," Grampa said, wadding them, stems and all, into his mouth. "They not ripe. I remembers when I was a slave boy, eating foxgrapes in the fall after the frost."

He had never been a slave, Sis knew, and his remembering was mixed up with the stories he had heard. He thought he had come across the water in the dark hold of a ship, and described whippings and travellings and battles, even his own birth. No one believed him, but they listened.

They saw a white cottage ahead. Sis told Grampa they would ask for a drink of water. But then the dog started barking, just inside the picket fence, a big fierce yellow dog. Grampa stopped in the middle of the road.

"Go on and bark," he said to the dog. "I know you. You know better to bite old Grampa, you old barken dog, you." But he went no nearer.

"Prince. You, Prince! Shut up!" The voice was shrill and cross.

"Come on, Grampa," Sis urged. "Le's don't mess with that old dog."

Grampa would not budge. A tired bedraggled white woman came out of the screen door. "Prince!" she screamed. Then she saw them. "What you all standing there for?" she called to them. "Why don't you go on; standing there fretting my dog?"

But she held the dog by the neck and told them where the pump was. "Hurry up, now, and don't put your mouth on the spout. There's a tin cup."

Grandpa was so slow Sis could not wait. She pumped hard until the water splashed out fast and cold; then she bent over and put her mouth to the cold wet spout. They heard the woman calling.

"Come on, Grampa," Sis begged. "She might let that old dog loose."

"I ain't scared of no old dog," Grampa said, as he filled the cup again. But when the woman came muttering around the corner of the

house, dragging the dog by his neck, Grampa moved with dignity toward the gate.

The sun still burned them when it was halfway down the western sky. Sis could not understand it. She had been watching for the place, expecting it at every turn of the road. Surely it would be at the top of that hill; surely it was down in that low swampy valley. But the road ran on and on, white in the blinding sunlight.

"Boy," Sis said to a Negro child they met, "Boy, where the Piney Wood School?" She called him "Boy" to sound important, to show him she was a person going somewhere on business.

The boy tugged at his faded overalls. "Huh?"

"Where Jackson? Jackson up thisaway?"

He nodded. "I been there. On the bus. It ain't far. Rat on up the road a piece."

Grampa walked slower and slower. He hardly lifted his feet, and his shuffling made a scraping sound on the pavement that scared Sis. She tried to push him with her thoughts, with her own urgency, and forgot to entertain him with chatter.

The sun sank lower, behind the trees, and left the woods black and threatening. Night was coming, not far away; night full of danger, full of things with teeth and claws, and soft cold brushing things out of graves.

"Come on, Grampa," Sis begged. "We got to hurry."

"I old, Sis," he apologized. "I too old. Us better go back."

"Back?" She tried not to scream at him. "We can't go back. It's right up yondah." She peered ahead. "Look like I see it up yondah," she murmured slyly. "I sees it rat up yondah, look like."

"You don't see nothing up yondah," the old man told her. "I got to rest some more."

"You sit down, I goan walk rat on off and leave you. Goan walk rat on."

Grampa smiled. But he glanced up at the sky and saw that the sun was gone. He did not sit down.

They were surprised when the rattly old car stopped. Two stylish young Negro girls sat on the front seat and their father, wearing overalls, was in the back.

"We thought you all old Mr. Plum and Sarah May," said the girl driving, racing the engine, getting ready to drive on.

"Oh, Miss," Sis could not hide her desperation. "Oh, lady!" She could not let them leave her and Grampa among the wildcats and han'ts. "Us . . . we . . . we wants to git up towards Jackson."

She wiped away the tears of relief when they were safely in the car. Nothing could discourage her, once out of the threat of darkness, not the sullenness of the girls when they heard the man asking her and Grampa to spend the night, not the hostility of the black woman waiting at a board shack like their own, not the way they invited her and Grampa into the kitchen so reluctantly, ashamed of the food. Sis and Grampa slept on a pallet before the gaping fireplace. Sis was surprised to hear the girls giggling behind her back, before she had stretched out good. She saw them putting on their fine dresses and their bracelets at sunup, leaning over the cracked mirror to put on lipstick until their mouths shone thick and red, like bloody gashes.

"Where you all going, Jackson?" the black woman, already knowing, asked them as they got into the car.

"To the Piney Wood school," Sis said. "To get educated."

"Piney Woods!" They were impressed. "I got a girl friend went there. Runs a typewriter and ever'thing."

"We goan buy us a car." It was the younger girl, not to be outdone. "Cost us eight hundred dollar. A fine car, near'bout new."

"Eight hundred dollar!" It was almost the first time Grampa had spoken, drowsing away in the car as it bumped over the ruts back to the highway.

"Yeah. Eight hundred dollar." She let each silver dollar clank impressively. "We makes good money at the plant."

"You could buy a farm! House too." Grampa stared at her.

"We got a farm. Farm enough to do us." Her bitter voice told them the hours she had bent chopping the cotton and picking it, the weary miles of furrow she had travelled over the meager and begrudging land. "We don't want no more farm."

They waved goodbye at the highway, stood watching the car go back the way they had come.

How different, to be travelling in the brightening morning, with stomach comfortably full. How happy the journey, how light her heart. Sis could have run, yelping like a puppy. It was only that Grampa walked the same as before, dragging his feet.

But nothing could hold down the joy inside Sis and she sang in her sweet thin voice. How could she doubt, in the early new day, that they would get to the school? She kept watching. She expected to see it just ahead, at the top of the next hill, showing beyond the next turning. She would see it, all of a sudden, right there in front of them.

But the road ran on and on. After each turning there would be only more and more highway, stretching endlessly. When they passed through a little town, Sis, remembering, stopped in a store and bought a box of crackers and a bottle of pickles. She saw the redheaded boy grinning as she counted the pennies out of her pocketbook. Sis stuck out her lower lip sullenly and switched the tail of her skirt as she walked out into the sunlight again.

With the crackers and the pickles she felt fortified for anything, and Grampa, too, was encouraged.

On they walked, forever and ever, up hill and down, sometimes through woods of pine and oak, sometimes past fields of cotton just bursting its bolls, showing a little white. The corn was parched and yellow; dust softened the green of tree and bush.

Sis was not tired, even when the angry sun stood high above, burning her head through her hair. But she was watching Grampa. He must not stop. She would never let him stop again until they got there. She opened the bundle and handed some crackers to Grampa.

She watched the way he ate the crackers, writhing his lips about them, waiting for them to be soft enough to swallow. He did not look at Sis, and he did not strain his eyes ahead looking for the place. The way Grampa looked, it did not matter much to him, one way or the other.

Sis could not understand the ebbing of her courage, the fear, round and heavy in the pit of her stomach, every time she looked at Grampa. Something was ailing him. He looked ashy, as Lady had done before she died. They could only go on, but Sis was afraid.

It was then that the blue jay alighted on the plum tree. Sis felt the weight lifted from her when Grampa laughed at her imitation of the jay

bird. But his feet still dragged. They were quiet, Sis and Grampa, but inside she began the praying again. She felt ashamed of herself, finally.

"Grampa, you looks tired. You want to rest?"

"I'm all right, child."

Sis was proud of him. The day before, he had been complaining all the way. Now of course it was past the complaining time. Sis saw how he favored one foot a little.

"Your feets hurt you, Grampa?" She wished he were back in his old chair by the back door, and she beside him. What had made her start on a trip so far, to a place so unknown? What good was school to Grampa, older than time itself? She could not think what had driven her to do it.

"My feets all right, child," Grampa said. "I got a little stitch in my side is all. Nothing much."

"Mamma said to come. She said not to go off and leave you, you so old."

"Um-humm."

"Said I goan learn to read and write at the school. Said I got to."

"Ummm-ummmph!" Grampa had heard this many times. "A niggah that can read and write, he can do anything, git anywhere." Grampa did not know this for a fact; he was quoting Lady.

Sis could feel the heaviness in the pit of her stomach; sometimes it rose and stuck in her throat. She kept glancing at the sun, hardly started on its downward course. She wished Grampa would complain and fuss; his patience scared her. Maybe the school would be at the next turning. It had to be up there at the next turning of the road.

When Grampa fell down, he did not fall all at once. He leaned forward a little, as if he were listening. He cocked his head to one side, listening, and then his knees buckled under him, and he slid to the ground noiselessly and easily as if he had been practicing all his life. He gave a little grunt, "Ummmfff!" of anger or surprise, and lay still.

Sis watched him. She could not believe what her eyes saw. She stood and looked at him lying still in the road before she screamed.

"Grampa! Grampa!" Her childish screams came out of a mouth that hung open, and the salty tears ran into it. She shook him wildly, taking his arms and tugging and pulling, trying to get him to his feet again. She had known all the time that once he was down he would never get

up. He lay at the side of the highway. An automobile whizzed by so close it almost ran over Grampa's foot.

"Git up, Grampa!" she kept begging. "Oh, git up. Oh, git up. Oh, Grampa, git up!"

She managed to pull him a little farther to the side of the road after another car had whizzed by his feet. A car might run right over Grampa, lying in the road, run over him before the driver saw him.

Although she was frenzied, she could not truly believe for a long time that Grampa was dead. It was simply that he was so hard to get started, once he stopped. She needed Grampa to be walking beside her. With him lying still, she was scared, lost.

Finally she began to know that Grampa was dead. He was gone, like Lady. That changed everything. She stopped her wailing and her moaning. Grampa was dead and it was her fault. She had killed him.

At the same time, it was not she, Sis, who had killed Grampa. He had died during the journey, but the journey itself had not been a thing they could take or not. Lady had said they must go; Sis knew they had to go; Grampa had not argued against it at all. The trip had to be made; there was something driving her, stronger than any of them. She could not leave Grampa all by himself in the shack and he had died on the trip.

But she was still terrified. With Grampa not there, she was alone, a child in a far-off land, not knowing where she was going, not daring to turn back. She could not stay. She had to get on up the road.

Sis saw a buzzard in the tip of an old dead tree. Buzzards always knew about death. Even before it happened, they knew.

Sis looked down at Grampa. She moved his bundle nearer his hands; his Bible was in it. She glanced up at the sky again to see where the sun stood and without another look at the old man she walked steadily up the road.

Sis knew what she was doing. She knew the horror of not being properly buried, the greatest concern of Grampa's life. She knew about the burial insurance back home, knew he had expected to be buried where Lady was, among his friends, with God watching.

But she walked on. What else could she do? There was no going back, no bringing Grampa back to life; no physical possibility of looking after his body from which his soul had already gone.

It was completely beyond her power and so out of her hands. Sweet Jesus God would have to take care of Grampa's body.

Sis did not feel like skipping and jumping any more. The sun was dropping in the west; hunger was gnawing at her stomach. Her thoughts seemed light and far away, dancing up above the top of her head.

It might be right ahead. At the school, they would know what to do about Grampa. They would know everything at the school. But of course the school was thousands of miles away; she would keep walking until she, too, fell down like Grampa and never got up again. She kept thinking of herself and Lady and Grampa, standing in the kitchen, eating the good hot cornbread and the hot turnip greens. Cold buttermilk. Side meat fried, and molasses.

She passed a filling station where two or three cars were parked. Some white boys, nearly grown, stood drinking from enormous bottles. She could taste the cold orange flavor as she watched out of the corner of her eye. It would be sweet and a little acid going down her throat. Cold and sweet and wet. She heard them laughing and talking as she hurried past, a thin little Negro girl with knobby knees.

The dusk came on with surprising suddenness. The sun had appeared to stand quite high in the west, above the treetops. Then all at once it dropped behind the tallest trees. There were long shadows. From the woods the dark was creeping toward the road. Sis gave a little cry of despair and tried to quicken her steps. Night coming and she not there. She would never be there. She shivered. Jesus God had seen how she had done Grampa. Jesus was mad with her.

"Keep rat on walking," the voice said. "It ain't far. Just up the road." It was Lady's voice and Sis felt the warm tears come to her eyes.

"Grampa," she said to Lady. "Grampa."

"I knows. You couldn't help it."

"He ain't buried."

"You can't help it," Lady insisted. "You just a little girl. Us niggahs, we got to do the best we can. Jesus looking after Grampa. You just keep on. You goan git there."

"You said to come."

"You got to. You goan learn a heap at school."

"Reading and writing," Sis said, wiping her eyes.

"Ever'thing. Goan learn ever'thing. Be big and rich. Goan ride in a fine car and have plenty firewood. Plenty quilts. All you wants to eat. Apples and oranges. Meat ever' day. Goan have money to give to them what ain't got nothing to eat. Goan be a schoolteacher and teach the chillun what ain't got nobody to teach them. You got to git there."

"Mama," Sis cried, wiping her eyes again. "Mama, you stay with me."

She did not know whether Lady was really there. She knew about ha'nts, but they were cold and creepy, not warm and comforting like Lady.

The car ground to a stop. Sis turned in surprise. She had not heard it approaching.

"Git in, girl," somebody ordered.

"Aw, Pete, for the love of God," another voice said. "She ain't nothing but a young'un."

"Git in, girl," the first voice said.

They were the boys she had passed at the filling station. Sis was puzzled. She was so relieved to hear human voices that she could not understand the little throb of fear in her.

"Git in, git in," Pete said. "You want to ride or not?"

Sis giggled. "I sho' does. I tired."

She got into the back seat, beside one of the boys. "Aw, for the love of God, Pete," the boy not driving kept saying. "You all make me sick."

"Shut up, Ralph," Pete jeered good-naturedly. "Where'd we put that liquor, Ed? You remember?"

"Sure." Ed spoke from his place beside Sis. "Keep on going. I'll tell you."

Sis shrank back into her corner when the boy reached toward her. She sat rigid as a pole as she felt his hand on her.

"She ain't got nothing on," Ed stated. "Not a damn thing but a dress." Pete laughed raucously, but Ralph kept saying, "Aw, for the love of God. This makes me sick at the stomach."

"Listen to the Christer. Sixteen years old and he acts like he was born yesterday. Where is that liquor, Ed?"

"Hey, stop. Wait a minute. Wait, I think we put it right back there."

Pete stopped, put the car into reverse. Sis pushed hard into her corner. The boys were all staring into the darkness.

"Naw, this ain't it," Ed said. "It must be a little farther on."

"Aw, nuts," Pete muttered. "How come we put it there anyhow?" They drove on slowly, still peering into the blackness.

"Wait a minute," Ralph said quickly. "Here it is. This is the place."

"You sure? I can't see a wink."

When the car stopped the three boys got out. "You stay right there, girl," Pete called back, "if you don't want your brains beat out."

Sis heard them crashing about. She was too paralyzed to move. Much as she feared the boys, she was still more afraid of the dark woods.

A voice spoke softly into her ear, making her jump.

"Beat it, girl," Ralph said. "Here, this way. I got the door open. Go down the road a little ways and hide until we're gone." Sis stood up, felt beside her for the little bundle.

"Ain't you got no sense?" he hissed. "Don't never get in no more cars with white boys if you don't want . . ." and he ended up with a mouth full of obscenity. "Beat it."

Sis stumbled out of the car and ran through the darkness, crashing blindly into bushes. She stumbled over a log and fell and crouched where she had fallen, like a rabbit crazed by hounds.

"Hey, Ralph," said Pete's voice very near. "I don't see no big oak tree. Where in hell is that liquor?"

"Maybe it ain't the place," Ralph admitted.

"Oh, the hell you say. Come on." She heard more crashing, then, "Hey, she's gone!"

"What?"

"That little blackbird is gone."

"Well, let her go. Let's get going. I got 'bout enough of this."

When the car had gone, its lights dipping into a hollow and disappearing, Sis got up again and ran along the side of the road. She was past crying, past any feeling except numbness and a creeping at the back

of her neck, where a hand was reaching out toward her. She wanted Lady to come back, but there was nobody, nothing.

She heard and trembled at all the little night noises, the insects and the murmur of the leaves in the dark. She heard the far-off bay of a dog, the lonesome whistle of a distant train. She could not stop, but how could she go on? She was breathing in gasps, and in her side a pain caught her and did not let go. When she saw the lights of a car like a probing finger, she stepped off the road into the woods. It was the boys again; she could hear their voices as the car moved slow and threatening, making long shadows about her. Then, the car gone, she was back at the road again, far more afraid of the black woods than of any people.

Time had no beginning or end. There was only the pain under the bottom of her foot, where a blister had burst, and the ache in her side and the ache in her throat. Black woods and black despair. But she kept on walking. If she stopped a minute the hands would grab her. Even when she saw distant car lights again she stepped only a few feet off the road.

Sis never knew when she sank down. She had either fainted or gone to sleep on her feet. One moment she was walking, fearing the distant car lights; the next she opened her eyes and saw the paling of the eastern sky, the first wash of pink. She felt herself trembling, shivering, for the night had been cool with a touch of fall in the air, and the ground where she lay was wet with dew.

The road was right beside her, stretching away into the distance. Where it rose from the low swampy place, she could see the sun shining on the cement, whitening it with daylight and hope.

"It ain't far now. It just up this old road," Sis said aloud. She stood up carefully, keeping her weight off her blisters. She ached all over, but she picked up her little bundle and walked on, her heart as light as spongecake to see the daylight again.

"Just rat at the top of that hill and there it will be. Spelled out in great big words, like Mama taught me from the letter. A great big old building, maybe, all shining like diamonds. Great big letters so I can read it." Sis could read only three words, "Piney Woods School," because those were all Lady knew to teach her.

It was not at the top of the hill. For the first time, Sis wondered whether possibly she had passed it. The sun had come up and the whole sky was brightening. The trees became green instead of gray. Sis heard a squirrel chattering and turned her head to look.

She stared. She could not believe her eyes. It was an iron arch, with the words spelled out in big iron letters, "Piney Woods School."

Sis could read them plain as day, just as Lady had taught her. To think they were there. She knew, reading the words, that she had actually never in this world expected to see them.

Her mouth stretched into a wide grin. She said the words aloud, stepped inside the arch, turned and looked back to see that she was truly inside, gave a skip. She saw nothing but a little dirt road through the trees, but she never doubted what was ahead.

Well inside the fence, Sis slipped off into the woods grown friendly in the daytime.

When she was hidden, she lifted her old dress over her head and stood skinny and naked. Proud Sis took her red dress out of the bundle and slipped it over her head. She put on the shoes, a size too small, arrogantly ignoring the pain of the blister. She reached back to button her wrinkled dress, then, wadding the old dress carelessly, stuck it deep into a red haw bush.

Proudly Sis took her little pocketbook in her hand, and gingerly walked to the dirt road again. Proudly she marched, stepping firmly upon the burning blister, pinched in her shoes. Her face was radiant and impudent with joy. Her face was ashy with dust, her legs scratched and rusty.

"Piney Wood!" she cried, her face transfigured, her sorrow past and forgot. She saw a cluster of unpretentious brick buildings ahead of her and stood still for a moment, seeing palaces. She began to skip awkwardly, on toward the buildings.

RIDDLE AND REASON IN MODERN POETRY

By JANE MAYHALL

Not long ago, John Crowe Ransom, one of our best known critics of contemporary poetry, said, "The modern poet has disclaimed social responsibility in order to secure . . . pure aesthetic effect. He cares nothing, professionally, about morals, or God or native land. He has performed a work of dissociation and purified his art." If one listens to Mr. Ransom's words with the ears of a layman, one's reactions will be not of shock but merely of incomprehension. If one receives his statement against the background of the *avant-garde* literati, one will probably feel that it expresses a respectable twentieth-century point of view, nurtured in "progressive" and educated atmosphere and pronouncing in a sincere and reassuring manner one's own aesthetic position. However, if one examines Mr. Ransom's aesthetic claims with a mind uncolored by the special presuppositions of either laymen or literati, one is tempted to exclaim: Here is the riddle and what is the reason?

For, when Mr. Ransom praises the poet as a being who is "dissociated" and "purified" he is expressing not a charming intellectual paradox, as might be supposed, but rather a psychological impossibility. First of all, art itself (as any psycho-physiologic analysis of the creative *act* will tell us), stems from the two brute founts of personal egotism and social awareness—and cannot at any time withdraw from the forces which provide it with life-giving nourishment. That is, it cannot withdraw unless it *ceases* its action. A man may be hostile (professionally or otherwise) to morals, God, or native land, but in order to be "dissociated" from them or their implications, however we may choose to interpret them, he would have to be dead. And the poet is certainly not one who is supposed to be dead, but rather one who is unusually alive to his world.

As for Mr. Ransom's "purity" in art, one suspects that in this particular context "purity" is a semantical boast propagandizing for the intellectual elite. The state of mental, physical, or psychological "purity"

was never other than personal, preferential selection. To define that preference as the pure, cannot but be a somewhat preposterous attempt to isolate one's own perceptions and crown them there the truest of truths.

However, with all due respect for Mr. Ransom and critics like him, what is interesting here is not that he is right or wrong, but that he chooses to express himself in such a fashion—and that many of the serious contemporary poets adhere, almost involuntarily, to his particular species of aesthetic belief. Those who dwell in the upper regions of refined taste live in a climate so naturally "alienated" from existence (in the usual sense) that to mention the fact of alienation would be as unnecessary as to mention the fact that one breathes. It is, for instance, a patently accepted phenomenon that to the modern poet the words God, morals, and native land simply do have an unpleasant smell. In fact, the smell is there even before he comes to know of, or to guess at, the cultural implications of those words. The patterns of reactions are already set. For in the poet's world, as in any other world, habits in ideas may very often be suggested and determined by the mental stamp of the immediate environment. Long before he is familiar with the histories of religion, the sources of morals, and the corruptions of his native land, he has read the discriminatory literary reviews, attended cocktail parties, and taken a literature course in a progressive college. And the chances are that his reactions, supposedly both scholastic and original, will but fall neatly into the fashionable categories of opinion, as surely as a sleep-hungry cat will curl up in the nearest corner. This is inevitable and not without value. To be sure, fashion may be, to a great extent, based on fact. The dynamic disillusion of the '20's certainly was. It is unnecessary to analyze that specific quality of "boredom" and "weariness," which possessed the best and less often the worst poets of the time. The strong nihilistic trend in social thinking provided, in America as it did in Russia some time before, an excellent opportunity for free play in creative idea. Naturalism and fantasy lived together in sin, all varieties of spiritual anarchy flourished. Where the elder poets had merely pronounced intellectual disbelief, the younger ones practiced devoutly an emotional allegiance to the utter dissolution of all that conceivably *had been* and *was*.

As must be emphasized, such was the mental disposition of the time. And it was the frame in which were set many fine and perhaps some great poems. In this frame, the words God, morals, and native land, came

in for a fate worse than death; they were given such fierce connotations of the Cheap, the Empty, it would have been easier (for them) had they historically succumbed and been forgotten altogether. However, they had to live; and they are still living, to an extreme degree, through days and moments of highly accelerated transvaluations. Now, the intellectual rejection *of* and yet emotional connection *with* these particular words carries, in operation, a unique aesthetic danger. For if the words "native land," etc. waft to us the odor of a dead tradition, it is also true that the contemporary reaction against them is not less odorous of false absolutes and popular idealisms. Instead of being an effect of critical conscience, the new and heretical dialectic may institutionalize the swagger of the aesthete. To put it familiarly, the overpowering of authority may be the mere substitution of one hierarchy for another.

II

The theme of renunciation is a pregnant one. The decay of the moral and religious order has always worked evocatively on the creative mind. Crumbling standards provide an ample opportunity for moseying among the "broken images" and selecting or rejecting whatever conventions and institutions one freely desires. Freedom, at this point, it is to be understood, results chiefly in the *sensation* of psychological release. The innovation of the new tradition gives one the double aesthetic pleasure of order in disorder. The innovator may be praised for having the courage to destroy the "fallacies" of the past, and yet be admired for possessing the wit to reorganize human valuations. The very immediacy of chaos, social, moral and religious, demands just that reorganization. And ideally, action becomes, at that moment, the comrade of inspiration. Then the poet, whose task it has been in the quiet hours of the world to perceive these moments of his life and of other lives in all varieties of possible qualitative levels, now has a chance to use that stalwart tool, imagination, for exciting and specific purposes. Even if the "purpose" is to speak out rejection. Should he feel this to be clearly necessary, he must, in the nature of things, function primarily as the destroyer, the critic. Yet, if we are to see the whole picture, we must realize that, in the polity of the psyche, a focus on "destruction" contains a strong nucleus of "construction."

It is safe to suppose that in human experience, the present always confounds the past. That which was once profoundly necessary, dynamic,

original, may in time become superficial, commonplace, even useless. The general *movement* passes in many different ways. Santayana desires to see it pass in this manner: "The arts," he says, "may die of triviality as they were born of enthusiasm." And might it not also be said that the arts (or other things) may be born of triviality and die of enthusiasm! The possibilities are endless. Things are born and die in an infinitude of manners. Taking in and giving out, impression and expression may occur in all their endless, organic forms. The important element of the event is, however, *realization,* the fortunate moment when the whole plan of action changes, when old "used-up" experience turns fresh and flows like a new pulse through the body of the present.

Around 1920, on the very bright threshold of what is now considered modern poetry, there occurred just such an ecstatic discovery. What a galaxy of highways there was promised in the rejection of the old Victorian cowpaths, that useless, meaningless past! And what passionate, undefined meanings circulated in the air, like the wisdom of lovers. There was yet no word to pronounce them. Then, a group of poets, variously named the Imagists, set about to characterize their delicious dissociation from the past by renouncing the "interiors" of persons and things. Their interests were amorously inclined to the surfaces of colors and lines, exactitudes in form. In a sense, they created a flatland fairy folk of natural images, devoid of inner life or souls, the greatest "reality" of things being their appearances. In H.D. we found this devotion to "visual experience":

> Whirl up, sea—
> whirl your pointed pines,
> splash your great pines
> on our rocks,
> Hurl your green over us,
> cover us with your pools of fir.

Such a rejection of meaning was meaningful! The visual contrast between sea waves and pine trees *was* the subject. It was a subject so attractive and convincing that it was able to create whole new vistas of perceptual intensity, to alter our responses and to resolve (like an argument) the *differences* between trees and waves. The technique for writing this poetry is, it has been said, as easy to learn as any other convention. The simple structure might be described thus: tension of feeling is aroused which,

having made a place for itself in the heart of the reader, is deftly sifted through images and things, endowing their surfaces with persuasive intimacy. For the most part this process is to take place in an easy and casual balance of sentences, making the assimilation of the "meaning" seem wonderfully effortless.

One cannot praise the Imagists enough, or describe in detail the release of the imagination which came in the oversimplification of subject. Theirs was a channel which attracted a bevy of strong currents, talents like Marianne Moore, Ezra Pound and, a little later, Wallace Stevens. It may be said that the very early Imagist "thinking" began as far back as 1913 but did not come into its richest development until about 1921 or 1922. Although T. S. Eliot did not stem directly from this movement, he was at one time or other a member of the group. His own astute pedantry, wed to a poet's music, produced a special inflection on the clear image. In his use of the method, already the "tone" of that image was stirring echoes of symbolism; the image for him *became* the Symbol.

But before that important pattern came into being, the Imagists, it may be said, lacked rational connectives and philosophic conclusions and therefore actually did produce a different kind of "thinking." At least the younger generation, propelled by zeal into faith, asserted that here at last were expressed the "realities implicit in the language." To put it fancifully, it was as if the writing *between* the lines were exposed, as if the verbal play of the subconscious were left to its own patterns of construction—and the lines of narrative and rational development were simply left out. But this kind of communication had a severe limitation: it was unable to express meaning to other than a select few who were willing, for one reason or another, to believe in the idiom. However, for the initiate, the School of the Imagists served as a kind parent who allowed his children free play, for better or for worse.

III

In the realm of the better, Eliot and Pound produced a countercurrent; they *deepened* their images with almost direct meaning. Theirs was a discreet criticism of the social scene. However, their poems were so sailing in verbal music, so ornamented by classical references, that it might have been easy for the reader to believe that they had no "association" with, or relation to their own environs. It is certain that the aesthetic

process was one of rejection. We don't need to follow the personal lives of the two men to know that. (Eliot's flight to aristocratic England and Catholicism; Pound's—although the lesser artist—escape to Italy and its *coup d'état* Fascism.)

In Eliot's beautiful and highly organized introspection one finds themes of marvelous, fugal clarity. The growth of the metaphorical "plot," which is uniquely his, conveys particularly in his earlier poems always the strong sense of the fugue: the live inner tension of emotional misgivings: the eloquent controversy between "mind" and "body" coming to a full dissonant decision (chord); the inclusion of the two. It comes clear in a poem like the "Love Song of Prufrock," with its tragic dissolution of the last lines, that yet radiate such extraordinary connotations from colors and sounds:

> We have lingered in the chambers of the sea
> By sea-girls wreathed with seaweed red and brown
> Till human voices wake us and we drown.

The effect is one of sensory exaltation; although the ending appears to be a sad one. But in the sadness, one catches the glimpse of a word whose shape is "wreathed." One's inner eye still lingers on and enjoys the warm-hued responses to "red" and "brown." Although the sense of the lines is the sense of some kind of death, the life still beats through them until the very last period. And perhaps the reader feels that here is emotional paradox, a rare sensation of the ambiguous. But it is possible that Eliot was himself at best when he had not yet made the commonplace choice, when, perhaps, he still held to his ambiguities and had not yet relinquished them in favor of the spiritual repose of the Church.

One may, however, and always will admire his honesty as well as his skill, the hypnotic simplicity and biblical dignity:

> April is the cruellest month, breeding
> lilacs out of the dead land, mixing
> Memory and desire, stirring
> Dull roots and spring rain.

as one may also distrust his metaphysical allegiance to passivity:

> I do not like being moved: for the will is excited; and action is a most dangerous thing; I tremble for something factitious,
> Some malpractice of heart and illegitimate process.

Perversely enough, belief becomes for Eliot a rule for inaction. As Delmore Schwartz comments in the *Nation* (on the *Four Quartets*): Eliot's new poetry is so much a rejection and renunciation that the affirmation of belief seems only a "lyrical afterthought." It is, indeed, in the *Four Quartets* that one gets the full impact of this melancholic and statical trance. To be sure, the poetry itself is always executed in fine taste and adheres magnificently to the canons of refinement. It might be said that in a less talented artist than Eliot, the mood which he very often expresses might show itself as mere intellectual peevishness.

But T. S. Eliot was, after all, a man unashamed of his kind, artistically enunciating all that befell him. And at a period of social crisis he presented a unified view of so intense a nature that it could not but have an effect upon his contemporaries who too felt "out of the picture." While Eliot yearned for the framework of Latin virtues (to him, the specific cultures which the modern world had lost and America so grossly lacked) his contemporaries yearned for Eliot—for a local divinity to guide them. And if they made the mistake of imitating his ideas as well as his intensity, the mistake is a common one in the process of learning. Who can blame them, in so confused an era? Inhibited by the watchdogs of Freud and Marx barking at every unidentified impulse, and yet confined to the "crowd-existence" where impulse "shades off" (as Van Wyck Brooks complained) into mediocrity, what a difficult thing life could be! Why would they not follow the inclinations of an Eliot? At least they would be stimulated by his direct emotional vitality. Who cared about his philosophical leanings, anyway? At least here was provided a familial tradition for the "lost generation."

At that time such unalike poets as Richard Aldington, Archibald MacLeish, Conrad Aiken, and Marianne Moore all seemed to adhere more or less to the same aesthetic principles as Mr. Eliot. Each in his and her own way managed a kind of self-imposed withdrawal from the world. On such principle, Michael Roberts (the English critic) commented sympathetically, "they are seeking an apprehension beyond the commonplace." As to whom and what he meant to depreciate by "the commonplace" is another story and a significant one. But it is not directly related to the subject of this paper.

IV

In any case, it may be said that at this time the fear of social chaos was generally greater than the desire to be enriched by that chaos. One cannot reasonably wish that there had been an Emily Dickinson to establish from the *special* perception a total view of "society." As one could not, in turn, regret there were no Whitmans to strike some relational spark between the artist and his time. The self-appointed Whitmans who emerged (or tried to) were incredibly unlike him. Hart Crane, for instance, who appeared a little later on the comet-tail of a supposedly revived *Americana*—although he came burning with rhetorical passion—produced not the simple ambulating lyricism of his literary forefather, but a greatly complicated strategy of cross-meanings and high-pressure adjectives. Indeed, his very condensation of metaphor achieved a terrifically recalcitrant meaning:

> Twin shadowed halves: the breaking second hold
> In each the skin alone, and so it is
> I crust a plate of vibrant mercury
> Borne cleft to you, and brother in the half.

This kind of writing was certainly motivated by the same kind of dynamic subjectivism as that of a Whitman. But the effect, in its difference from Whitman, is incomparable.

Crane wrote at a time when the "good gray" one was either oversentimentally worshipped by an utterly unqualifying "I-love-America" audience, or was critically snubbed by the supersensitive academicians. The latter group, while regarding Whitman as one who had "anticipated" the psychology of modern poetry, was made too uncomfortable by his own (quote) "long-windedness" to spend much time in his poetic company. If, however, these moderns were amused by Whitman's "long-windedness," it is possible that Whitman himself (had he known them) would have been no less bored by their own "short-windedness."

For, undoubtedly, the desire to "compress a situation into a single memorable image" can be as limiting as any monistic drive. It must be understood that it is not the "single" image that is dangerous to creative spontaneity, but it is the *attitude* toward that singularity which presents the problem. If the artistic "data," which are transformed into the subject matter of a poem, become (in the mind of the poet and perhaps in the mind of his reader) more than functional to the poem—if the survival

rights of the data enter into the realm of absolute values and hence depart from the world of mere aesthetic relations, it is to be feared that the poet himself has sold his poetic birthright for a pot of moralisms.

An obvious example of the "selling-out" process may be shown in this hypothetical case: suppose a certain poet, having once had a deep and unique experience of humility, then translated that experience into a poem whose central dynamic was the phrase, "Lamb of God." Now, suppose that the poem was satisfactory in its effect, that the arrangement of the premises held together, that the relation of idea and emotion harmonized into an approximate whole. But suppose that the poet, for one reason or other, because of his inner insecurities or outer pressures, found it psychologically necessary to ascribe the "success" of the poem to a certain phrase, say, "The Lamb of God." Already, in his own mind, the words would have begun to acquire a metaphysical importance. To manipulate the same "success," he therefore uses the words in another poem, and another. They become his favorite words, but he isn't satisfied to call them "favorite." He wants to call them "superior" and by various implications, does. Other words become irrelevant facts. This procedure of word precedence, carried to an extreme degree, gradually diminishes his vocabulary and imaginative thinking. The "Lamb," repetitiously used with an identical meaning, loses its aliveness, its original and vivid picture of humility; the once natural perception *conceptualizes,* and ends up a static term. Again: "God," losing its relation to the varieties of God-images (i.e. earth, fire, water, air or man, whatever it was to evoke in the original) catapults into an image-*less* abyss of the "One." No wonder then we have so often the self-satisfied, disillusioned yesterday's poet, warning us that all life is fiction and the pursuit of death is the true reality. It is a tempting cliché, but let us not be unaware of its implication.

In all fairness, it must be said that the process of narrowing one's point of view is, in a sense, self-rewarding and even somewhat necessary for the "deepening" of the perception. In the technique of composition, it is essential, to a certain degree, that the mind "terminate" its object. But it does not therefore follow that the object must also terminate the mind. Indeed, it must not. At all times the mind must be allowed not only to go into and around its object, but also beyond. For its vital artistic existence, the object must be furnished with the nourishing life of contrasts.

Often the creative thinker begins to regard the daily life as the "mere" mask of appearances, while the essence of his own personality he fancies as a cosmic and changeless truth, untouched by sun and moon, uncorrupted by human contact. This egoistic pattern is not limited to the artist alone, but is fitted over any person who seeks the absolute stability of a fixed reality. For the Freudian, it is the eternal *id*. For the Marxist, the economic causations establish the "true" reality. And for the religious poet (bewhiskered as of old, or in a streamlined Kierkegaard edition), the "spirit" becomes the ultimate face of life.

And then, there are the current religionists who doubt the "truth" of everything save criticism. Stopping on the first step of the scientific method, and standing there quite still, for as long as they possibly can, these people have managed to acquire for themselves a very sophisticated brand of absolutism. The analytic process has become the *all*. The work of art itself begins to serve as a characterless stooge against which "background" may be played the bombastic fireworks of the critical method.

This latter group constitutes a small minority, but they are the front-ranking intellectuals who are struggling desperately for a desperate power. Metaphorically speaking, they are unwittingly attempting to erect a steeple into which may be "let in," one fears, the very same kind of people as take to Latin doggerel and ancestor worship.

And what is the quarrel with criticism, with analysis as such? There is none. The objection again, can only be the use to which the method is put. In our times there may be an unconscious presupposition that the critical nature of man is to be presented as the "whole" nature of the generation. Obviously, this is an extremely unreliable picture of existence (aesthetic or otherwise) since it is partial and exclusive. For instance, it may shut out the creative desires, verbal fancy, and any numbers of causes for expression. It cannot be claimed, of course, that criticism does "harm" of itself, but it can be proved that when any system of procedure acquires a title to primacy for other than its own special usages, the precious quality of the hypothetical gets lost. And its place is taken by (regardless of how we define it!) a useless and dead weight of philosophic absolutism. I say useless, because particularly in the field of literature and poetry, ideas move forward and images are generated by the free *use* of the imagination at least as much as they are verified by the as-

sumptions of the age. Where else would one need more the open doors of *possible* ideas and *potential* truths?

V

A familiar theme, culled from the Romantic era and its offspring, is the birth and death of the poetic talent. Although the life of that talent is generally seen in somber Baudelairian hues or in the delicately compressed *Liebestod* mood of the early Rimbaud, nevertheless it characterizes for us a kind of "happy" pessimism—happy because we believe that the poet must live "that" way. Made receptive by our belief, we allow his work to flare up in our consciousness, illuminating and vivifying the world of things. And if he burns in a perception so coincidental with our own contemporary experiences, then we may call him a "great" talent. But in the impulse of our appreciation there resides also a habit of *apprehension* which anticipates the demise of the talent. It is our, as well as his, Romantic heritage, which produces that "tragic" picture of energy doomed to defeat. And then later, during the time which might be regarded as his mature years, we may comment without question on his sad, but inevitable deterioration. And if we are very superficial and very predetermined by the Romantic "plot figure" we may conclude that the addition of years has been too much of a burden for those frail sensibilities—that the buoyant perception of Youth must, after all, wither away in the Life Process. Now, of course, this deduction with its distaste for change and development, is as intellectually unsatisfying as it is factually unrealistic.

For it is possible that what could have actually happened was that those very valuable insights of the poet's Youth might have, for reasons unseen by us, hardened (in the passing of years) into a concretion of sheer prejudice. So the emotional impetus becomes the mental rule. As we have said, a poet like Eliot, at the inception of his career, finds the mood of regret important to him, is stimulated for a long time to draw on its manifold metaphor. The danger, of course, arises from the fact that the mood will, at some time, be outmoded. Time will never stay itself to prove that we are "right." Thus when we have, as in the *Four Quartets* the reiteration of melancholy: "The wistful regret for those who are not yet here to regret," and if we have not read the early Eliot so as to make the respectful reference to the psychological history of that dis-

position, it is quite possible that we may smile at, or be irritated by what may seem to be, by now, a veritable curio in expression.

A well-known voice of the last ten years, that of W. H. Auden, seems to have struck an organic and relational sound of poetic "realism," playing the ambiguities off against each other, always with a firm control of fact, yet vibrating with the richness of his own personal desires and preferences. He has, however, been described as a poet whose[1] "sensibilities are . . ." too much ". . . at the mercy of a set of principles." This refers to the definite philosophic premises which he employs: the catechismic thought patterns of Marx and Freud, whose mental children we all are, to a great extent. But if the stuff of Auden's poetry appears to be overcerebral, we must read it in the context of the times, where there is actually a tactual sense existing in the organization of his seemingly abstract words:

> Sir, no man's enemy, forgiving all
> But will his negative inversion, be prodigal:
> Send to us power and light, a sovereign touch
> Curing the intolerable neural itch.

"Negative," "inversion," "prodigal," "neural," by themselves have a rather technical taste. But put together in such a way, and read by a generation whose vocabulary contains from earliest years a fair amount of semiscientific words, the lines such as the ones given here reflect a certain emotional color and contain a satisfying density of allusions.

The whole point being here that the inner relation between the time and its teller *exists* and is intrinsic. The multiple associational values create the very core of the thrilling and indefinable aesthetic experience.

Take Auden's poem to Yeats:

> With the farming of a verse,
> Make a vineyard of a curse,
> Sing of human unsuccess
> In a rapture of distress;
>
> In the deserts of the heart,
> Let the healing fountain start,
> In the prison of his days
> Teach the free man how to praise.

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[1]From Cleanth Brooks' essay on Auden.

The vigor of these metaphors strikes us not only because of the choice originality but also because of the re-enforcement of our own present aesthetic mood. Moving over from the nihilistic edifice of Eliot's agony into the stoic Auden-acceptance of guilt, pain, and the "difficult" is an easy journey. In the popular mixed currents of psychoanalysis and neo-Christianity, "distress" may be properly acclaimed as "rapture" in any man's life, not only Yeats'. In topical terms of economics, "days" could be classed as "prisons," the bars cemented into place by various spheres of influence, industrial capitalism, totalitarian rulers, and so on. Or they could be more directly social prisons, the individual locked in an environment of overwhelming hostilities. Not that Auden "meant" any of that when he talked of Yeats. But the strong connotation of present circumstances was there. Each word of the poet stands in a well-grounded supposition. And the effectiveness of those words continues only so long as they are connected to the relational changes in the world itself. If the "aesthetic purist" complains of this, it may be said that the "world" takes in, fortunately for him and for us all, a lot of territory.

To come to the point, the thing to guard against is this: words, poems, and ideas must not be *forced* to go on beyond their original applications, beyond their functional time. In reference to Auden's poem, there might conceivably come a day when "human unsuccess" no longer carries the sense of spiritual prestige, when "human success" may, by connotation, become the heart's goal. Or there may come a time, difficult as it is to imagine, when days may not be *felt* as "prisons." Knowing that this may sound fallacious and superficial to certain serious-minded individuals who have certainly braved the shadows of ambivalences to reach a state of divine resignation to their human limitations, I hasten to say that one may suspect that such a resignation sounds like a repetition of a well-known religious attitude, imposed upon humanity some two hundred years ago.

T. S. Eliot's attractive disillusion and dissociation may well be only the scholarly rewording of Puritanical "guilt." The pure standards of our present-day critics may be only the reaction of an aristocratic disposition to the increasingly "vulgar" demonstrations of pluralistic fact in a world of unaristocratic reality. Certainly, the agrarian dogmas spring from the latter disturbance. When Allen Tate, one of their leaders, suggests hopefully that "society can bear an amazing amount of corruption and still

produce high cultures," we may stop a moment and ponder. As to what is "high" in culture is a matter of opinion. And that opinion will stand in direct relation to, and association with whatever the poet produces, be it projected in the formidable life of poetic metaphor or expressed in the simple nod of his head.

In any case, the poet will confirm his time not by erecting absolute standards or using isolationist tactics to veil that part which he cannot predict or understand at the moment. He will confirm his time and place by holding the very opacity of his material with affection and naming it its multiple names, as being precise requires and being useful directs.

IN DEFENSE OF THE CAVEMAN

By KATHLEEN THAYER

MAN WAS EASY PREY TO MAN in those days, and food was scarce. It became one of the habits of life, therefore, to always carry a crude club as a weapon. As soon as our savage ancestors met each other, they growled; and having growled, they raised their clubs; and having raised their clubs, they fell upon each other."

The above quotation from a book by Lillian Eichler frankly represents the "popular" conception of the Stone Age, but such ideas are by no means confined to those whose investigations of the subject have been somewhat casual. That "our half-brutish prehistoric brothers" were "given over to fearful crime and passion . . . preyed upon by hideous and grotesque delusions" was not conjectured but asserted as fact by William James. "Man," says H. G. Wells, speaking through the lips of a character in his novel, *The Croquet Player,* "is still what he was, invincibly bestial, envious, malicious, greedy. Man, unmasked and disillusioned, is still the same fearing, snarling, fighting beast he was a hundred thousand years ago."

He has a bad reputation, that ancestor of ours. It is curious that so many people seem to regard his extreme viciousness as a self-evident fact, a sort of axiom, which needs no logic or proof to support it.

It is reasonable to suppose that he was closer to the animals than we are. Well, then, how about the animals? In the world of nature, various species make ruthless and interminable war on each other, but seldom are animals deadly to those of their own species. In other words, we are conforming to the "law of the jungle" when we sit down to a good beefsteak dinner; but when we slaughter our own kind in war we are indulging in a kind of behavior which is altogether more fierce and vile than jungle law usually is. The howling tomcats in your backyard quarrel and scrap endlessly, but they seldom do much serious damage to each other. Their fights are much more comparable to fist fights among men than they are to war.

I know that "rogue" tomcats will sometimes kill and eat newborn kittens, but the cats I have had made it hard for me to believe such behavior is normal. My last full-grown tom, Snugs, took excellent care of his sister's kittens—bathing them, snuggling up with them to sleep, playing with them even more gently than their mother did, helping to drive away strange dogs or cats who might bother them. Like almost all of my cats, Snugs was toward those of his own species a thoroughly nice fellow—protective and tender with his sister's kittens, affectionate and gentle with his friends, and far from deadly to his enemies.

Among the more manlike animals, the monkeys and apes, you will find, not strange ferocious creatures, "given over to fearful crimes and passions, preyed upon by hideous and grotesque delusions" but rather a most amusing caricature of human society. Their selfish instincts, of greed and self-preservation, are stronger than ours, and their good instincts much weaker. But the good impulses are present. Says H. G. Wells in *The Science of Life,* "Sympathy is strongly developed in most chimpanzees. If one of their group is ill he will not be disturbed; now and again one will come over and caress the ailing companion. Actual whimperings or moans of pain will almost invariably bring the other chimpanzees round a sufferer, often with touching manifestations of concern. . . ."

Very common is a kind of monkey or ape which is reminiscent of the typical human comedy character—harmless, well-meaning, sympathetic toward the sick and weak, wishing to be generous and share what he has with his friends but finding, when a delicious tidbit of food is actually in his hands, that it is a little *too* precious to part with; feeling the urge, when danger threatens, to strike a heroically protective attitude toward a smaller comrade, he then finds when the menace gets really close that saving his own skin is after all his first concern. Admittedly, there are simian tyrants and brutes, just as there are human tyrants and brutes, but most apes are by no means completely selfish. When a chimpanzee's pals jump up and down, clasping him around the neck and begging and crying piteously for a share of what he has he will usually give them a *little,* but by the same token he will usually keep the lion's share for himself. Says George Jennison:

> At Belle Vue we have a cage containing three female chimpanzees. . . . Regular observation has disclosed a general tendency to kindness, with certain

> lapses and a rather amusing rough justice on the part of the largest animal. . . . Three bananas were thrown into the cage, of which B (the middle-sized one) took two. A (the large one) promptly dispossessed her of one, of which she gave one-half to C (the smallest) thus retaining one and a half for herself. A, which could easily rob the others, does not do so for her personal advantage. . . . Sometimes A will climb up the tree and then drop a banana to C below, but almost invariably each animal gets a share by mutual agreement. There would seem here to be the germ of that co-operation and sympathetic communion which lie at the root of progress.

There is perhaps no other animal on the face of the earth so ferocious-looking, so calculated to make the blood run cold, as a full-grown male gorilla. Yet according to Cherry Fearton this horrifying monster

> is a very harmless and peaceable animal. Admittedly, he does not look it. There is no single recorded instance of a gorilla attacking a man when attack has not been provoked. Though strong enough to strangle a lion, he lives on parsley and wild carrots. All the stories of a beast that beats his breast and roars are of a harmless creature until aroused in defense of his home. The only natural use for the gorilla's strength is the breaking down of branches with which to build a nest where his mate may rear her young babies.

Whatever the character of the full-grown male in a wild state (and accounts differ here) the young ones at least are delicate, sensitive, rather guileless creatures, and without affection and companionship they usually pine away and die of loneliness. Sometimes a young gorilla will be caged with a chimpanzee of similar age and sex, who frequently imposes on his powerful but loving friend in the most scandalous fashion. I have seen a quick-witted, naughty young female chimp swipe almost all of her gorilla-friend's dinner right out from under the latter's unsuspecting nose—and the gorilla was still unsuspecting when, her dinner finished, the chimp had as much left as she had had to start with. The gorilla, so heavy and powerful she could have handled her cage-mate like a baby, just climbed up beside her, put an arm around her neck and looked wistful—while the nervy little chimp sat calmly gorging herself, occasionally handing the gorilla a tiny morsel of her own stolen dinner!

Direct evidence from the Stone Age itself as to the character of early man is not very informative. We know that both the Neanderthal men (our cousins but probably not our direct ancestors) and the earliest true men made provision for a life after death, and we know that early True Man was a real artist, drawing and painting with a skill the world did not see again for many thousands of years. Beyond this, it is mostly guess-

work. The center of origin and development of man was probably to the south and east of Europe, which is the only region as yet thoroughly studied. But it may be said that with the exception of the Capsians, a relatively advanced race of Northern Africa and Southern Spain, who in all probability had many skills and folkways which did not spread throughout the rest of Europe until a later period—with the exception of the Capsians, whom we know from their pictures to have been acquainted with war, if the True Men of the Old Stone Age in Europe were guilty of warfare, or cannibalism, or slavery, or human sacrifice, they left not a shred of evidence to suggest it. As for the Neanderthalers, there is a deposit of charred human (or rather Neanderthal) bones which some authorities believe suggest cannibalism, but others are skeptical and consider this an unjustified hypothesis.

The culture of most modern savages is many thousands of years more advanced than that of the caveman, but there are a few exceptions. Most primitive of all were the Tasmanians, an extinct race the last member of which died about 1877. Physically they belonged to our species, they were truly *men,* yet their culture seemed to derive mainly from the period represented in Europe by Neanderthal Man. Unfortunately, accurate information about these recently living relics of an incredibly ancient past is all too scarce. What few data we have, however, suggest that they were mercurial in temperament, improvident, loving laughter but subject also to sudden fits of ill temper. "A burst of rage," says G. P. Murdock in *Our Primitive Contemporaries* "could melt into a sunny smile." They loved to mimic and joke; they adorned themselves with bright berries and flowers and sang sweet, plaintive songs. The men were the masters, the women had to obey. Occasionally men of different tribes would do battle with each other, at which times, we are told, the women went away and hid in the bush with the children, partly for safety and partly because they disapproved of the whole business and didn't want to have anything to do with it. The "war" is said usually to have ended by common consent with the first fatality, so perhaps that is not quite the right name for it. Most observers are agreed that the Tasmanians were not very bright, and since their weapons and tools were more crude than those of the earliest true men to appear in Europe, to me it seems possible that these extremely beastial-looking black men might have been the result

of a cross between an early negroid or negrito race, and something more primitive.

Much more plentiful is our knowledge of the Bushmen, an almost extinct race in the far south of Africa. Because of their often apelike profiles, because they are so much more primitive both physically and culturally than the other inhabitants of Africa, they are sometimes looked on with scorn as a degraded race, little better than animals. This is a great mistake. True, they lacked the knowledge of metals, of agriculture, the domestication of animals, the elaborate systems of government and society of the more advanced and warlike people to the north. They also lacked the habits of cannibalism, slavery, and human sacrifice prevalent elsewhere in Africa. Says Negley Farson, "Nearly all African hunters agree that the Bushman is the most superb hunter in the world." Farson found the Bushmen shy and timid until he laughed in their presence, upon which they at once seemed to lose their fear of him. He pictures for us their hearty, boisterous enjoyment of a joke and of merry, competitive games of their own. The Bushmen had an amazing knowledge of poisons, with which they used to tip their hunting arrows. They loved to adorn themselves with beads and with bright colors, with green powder from copper ore, with red ochre, with glittering scales of mica dusted over their hair, and, when they were really dressed up, with anklets containing pebbles to rattle as they walked. They had a dance which one observer said compared favorably with anything the European ballet had to offer. They were intensely fond of music. S. Passage contrasts "their rich, melodious voices singing slow sad songs" with "the harsh and discordant voices" of the warlike Kaffirs. Their musical instruments included a reed pipe, drums, a four-string harp evolved out of the bow, and a combination of twelve bows which formed a primitive dulcimer. They painted excellent pictures on the walls of their caves, although it is said that only certain members of the tribe were artists. Johnson, in *Tribes of the Congo* speaks of the unselfish way in which they divided their food. Like all African peoples, they were fond of proverbs, and W. J. Sollas translates one of theirs as "Death is only a sleep." The contents of one of their folk-tales Sollas summarizes thus: "A man accidentally wounded by another (while hunting); the wounded man begs the others to speak gently and not angrily to the one who has shot him; the dying man's last speech to his wife; the widow's lament; an old man's

speech on the faithfulness of woman and her husband's trust." Finally, Sollas concludes, "The more we know of these wonderful little people the more we learn to admire and like them. We may learn from them how far the finer excellencies of life may be attained in the hunting stage."

The island of New Guinea, inhabited for the most part by fierce, cannibalistic Papuans, shelters deep in its interior a few remaining negritos who have not found their way into the meat pots of their morose and warlike neighbors. White visitors are apt to find these friendly, happy-natured little black men a welcome contrast to the island's other representatives of the human race. Isolated little bands of such pygmies, or negritos, are found scattered here and there throughout the hot belt of the eastern hemisphere, and it seems probable that they represent what is left of one of the oldest and most widespread races of true men. Physically, culturally, and distributionally, they give every sign of being remnants of a long-past age, everywhere crowded out of earth's better lands by more advanced and warlike savages. The negritos, like the Bushmen, often have a knowledge of poison, a love of bright colors, flowers, music and perfume.

The negritos of the Congo region, like those of New Guinea, are surrounded by those who were until recently habitual cannibals, but they themselves would not touch human flesh, even if they were starving. "It is indeed notable," says Sumner in his *Folkways,* "that the pygmies of Africa and the Kubus of Sumatra, two of the lowest outcast races, do not practice cannibalism, although their superior neighbors do." (The Kubus, though largely Malay in origin like the other races of Sumatra, betray by their smaller stature and their kinky hair a probable admixture of negrito blood.) Negley Farson tells of his encounter with a band of pygmies in the Lturi Forest. "Ages of evolution," he says, "lay between us. . . . But there was something peculiarly *sympathetic* about them. They had the same impish charm that I had noticed in the Bushmen in Southwest Africa."

G. P. Murdock believes that the Semang pygmies of the Malay Peninsula are "unable to count beyond three." Like the Bushmen they are wonderfully clever hunters, but they know nothing of war and will not do battle with their own kind. When attacked by slave-raiding Malays their only recourse is to withdraw farther into their jungle fastness. The

position of women among the Semangs is relatively high, and between all men there is complete equality. They are friendly and cheerful, fond of dancing and singing and making merry; they share their food with the utmost generosity; and they believe in a life after death, burying useful weapons and treasures with their dead, just as the men of the Stone Age in Europe did. Their children are indulged, their aged honored and respected, never contradicted.

On our own continent are the Eskimos, whose culture, though rich in clever devices and inventions of its own, lacks many of the main-line developments shared by most of the rest of the world. They are usually considered to have been the earliest arrivals in this hemisphere; many of their implements are very similar to those of the Magdalenian era (latest division of the Old Stone Age in Europe); and according to some authorities their culture may have developed directly from that of the Old Stone Age, without many later contributions from the outside world. Curiously enough, the Eskimos and some of the old Stone Age Europeans share a certain peculiarity of the skull—that of being broad-faced though dolichocephalic—which is typical of no other known race, although of course this may be coincidence.

Eskimos are impulsive, passionate folk, and crimes of violence, committed in the sudden hot blood of anger, are not uncommon among them. Men are the masters; women must obey. They have absolutely no system of government, no laws except the laws of custom, no penalties except the disapproval of the community. There is no authority of one man over another, no word even to express an unequal relationship between men. And there is no word for war. They are merry and laughter-loving; they charm almost everyone who goes among them by their warm, spontaneous friendliness; and they are generous to a degree that white men often find almost incomprehensible. Like us, they consider it admirable but natural that a man should wish to risk his own life to save that of a fellow man, but unlike us they also consider it so natural as to be not even particularly admirable that he should wish to share whatever good things he has freely with his fellow men, especially if he has more than he needs, and others are suffering or starving for lack of them. Such greed and possessiveness as is considered normal by us looks sinful, shameful, unthinkable to an Eskimo. Vilhjalmur Stefansson gives us an interesting picture of the etiquette of hunting among a tribe of Eskimos who had

had no previous contact with white men. When one of the party of hunters killed a bearded seal or other big game, it was cut, he tells us, into as many pieces as there were hunters near enough to be summoned by hailing or signaling, *and to the slayer of the animal usually was assigned the smallest and least desirable portion!* You see, his was the highly coveted honor and pleasure of having made the kill, and therefore he didn't need so much else! Anything left undone by the men during this preliminary period in the way of sharing-the-wealth was completed later on by the women, who ran busily around the village with the meat they had cooked, eagerly pressing the choicest tidbits on anyone who might have been left out. Somewhat similar is Peter Freuchen's tale of an Eskimo wrestling match, at the conclusion of which not the winner but the loser received a prize, to console him for the beating he had taken—an arrangement which Freuchen claims to have found typical of Eskimo sportsmanship.

Eskimos are unendingly patient and indulgent with their children, never punish and seldom scold them. One Eskimo woman, on hearing of the custom of parents in other lands, expressed much indignation, remarking that anyone who could be so heartless as to strike a child did not deserve to have children.

We like to believe in progress; we like to think that men are better than they used to be. If today's bloody, war-torn world is the culmination of thousands of years of moral improvement, then indeed it is logical to suppose that, "As soon as our savage ancestors met each other, they growled, and having growled, they raised their clubs. . . ." But we have seen that there is little justification for such a conception.

What then? Have we grown worse instead of better?

There must have been a time—a long time, probably—when the earth was not and never had been crowded. In those days competition was not between men and men, but between men and beasts, and it was no doubt in those days that the race developed its standard set of characteristics, physical, mental, and emotional, as well as its first set of customs and folkways. There is no possible reason for supposing that during this period man would have been so different from the other animals as to have made a practice of warfare or cannibalism. Fierce modes of behavior toward fellow humans would have been senseless, and it is reasonable to suppose, therefore, that the long and terrible history

of human wickedness had yet scarcely begun. The only form of cruelty or callousness which would have had any survival value at this time would have been the abandoning to their fate of the hopelessly old and feeble, since in a hunting community which has no fixed home and which is dependent for survival on the hunting prowess of the young men, the attempt to take care of all the older members might mean death for the whole tribe. This custom, of abandoning the old, we do find in many extremely primitive communities, including some Eskimo, Bushmen, and African negrito tribes. There are, however, exceptions. The gentle little Semang pygmies of the Malay Peninsula care for their parents to the end, carrying them on their backs when the latter have become too feeble to walk.

But to Stone Age Man, the mighty hunter, the inventor of crafty weapons, there must have come a time when the other animals no longer afforded serious competition, when he had won his battle with the environment—too well! Then men would have begun to multiply beyond the limits that the land would support; and then, slowly and inexorably, the situation would have changed. Human life would have had an ugly tendency to become less precious. The competition would no longer have been between men and beasts, but between men and men, tribe and tribe, race and race. Cannibalism would here have been, from a practical standpoint, a highly reasonable and sensible expedient. Animals do not usually eat their own kind, but neither do they make war on their own kind, and it is at least probable that at first these two strange practices went together. (As one South Sea chief put it, "It is better to eat your enemy than to let him go to waste. Being killed is the bad part, not being eaten!" Another cannibal was righteously and honestly indignant at the idea of the whites making war on each other, and then not even eating the men they slew. What barbarians they must be, he exclaimed, to kill without any real purpose!)

This was not the time for the meek to inherit the earth, but to lose it. A new type would have tended to evolve, in whom the old simple instincts of fear, affection, sympathy, quick anger that expends itself in a moment, were less strong, or were under control—a warrior type, to whom human life, one's own or another's, was of little value. And the shifting and mingling of peoples hitherto separate would have facilitated genetically the production of such a variant strain, as under pres-

sure of the expanding population old balances were upset and men were pushed out to every corner of the globe, filling North and South America, filling the cold hostile lands of Northern Europe, filling the islands of the Pacific. This rivalry and competition would place a premium, too, upon invention and cleverness; the stream of culture would flow faster and faster, gaining in momentum, as indeed it did in the Neolithic or New Stone Age, which saw the spread of the bow and arrow, polished stone implements, pottery-making, cannibalism, strange tortuous religions, human sacrifice—and, most important of all, the domestication of plants and animals—to almost every corner of the globe. It was of course this last, agriculture, which relieved the pressure of the population, since land that will support only a scattered few hunters will give sustenance to millions of farmers.

But by then the damage would have been done, the folkways of men changed. Strange new customs and strange, cold new types of men would have evolved—brilliant, perhaps, courageous and masterful, conquerers and leaders born—but fatally unsuited in the long run for life in a stable and peaceful society. Yet if this is true they did not, they could not obliterate the more ancient type; they could not replace and supplant him wholly. We can have no sure knowledge of the characteristics of this ancient type. Yet a few scraps of information about an animal who lived long ago—the shape of his jaw, length of this bone or that one—are enough to bring to a paleontologist's mind a clear picture of that animal, if it is a species already familiar to him. If it is not, he will need more information before he can classify it. Similarly, although our sources of information are so meager, perhaps even the few scattered hints I have here presented may bring to the minds of many a personality picture of early man—because it is a familiar type. In it you will recognize the progenitor of many of the men and women that you encounter daily—the janitor, the taxi-driver, the men at work in the streets you cross, the professional athletes you read about in the papers. In it you will also recognize, no doubt, one of your own spiritual ancestors, one of the major sources of your personality and emotional make-up since it probably is roughly equivalent to what among animals and plants a geneticist calls the "wild type," carrier of all the sturdy old tried-and-true ancestral dominants, the type which, in spite of occasional flare-ups of variant or recessive strains, tends everywhere under normal conditions to gain ground steadily, slowly, irresistibly, and to outlast all others.

IN DEFENSE OF THE CAVEMAN

"Man is still what he was . . . invincibly bestial, envious, malicious, greedy," said H. G. Wells. True, perhaps; but is it not at least equally true and much more important to point out that the love which spends millions of dollars every year in this country on life insurance is the same selfless and protective love which animates the Stone Age Eskimo when he sings,

> I have lain sick since the autumn,
> And now I am weak as a child.
> Unaya, Unaya.
>
> Sad at heart I wish
> My woman away in the house of another,
> In the house of a man who will be her refuge,
> Firm and sure as the strong winter ice.
>
> Sad at heart I wish her away
> In the house of a stronger protector,
> Now that I myself lack strength
> Even to rise from where I lie.
> Unaya, Unaya. . . .

It is true that for many thousands of years human history has been a thing of blood and terror. It is true also that we have seen in recent years a temporary flare-up of the warrior type, in Germany, Japan, and elsewhere. Yet can we doubt that Primal Man is with us still, all about us, wherever we turn, the same today as he must have been twenty thousand years ago—simple-hearted, close to earth, a lover of life and not death, of peace and not war, a being to whom fellowship, laughter, and kindliness are more natural than are hatred and cruelty?

If the above suggested reconstruction of events is correct, then surely we need not despair. War is not "as old as the human race." The Age of War had a beginning, and the harnessing of the vast powers of atomic energy has now made certain that it will also soon have an ending. Whether that ending is to be brought about by world federation and an international reign of law and order, or by the extinction of the human race, depends of course on whether you and I and all of us have sufficient courage, faith, and determination to achieve the former. And in this most desperately important of all human endeavors since the world began, it may help to know that the "caveman within us" is not an insuperable object in our path, but one of the greatest of our allies.

THE INTRANSIGENCE OF EDMUND WILSON

By GRANVILLE HICKS

LAST SUMMER it was reported that seventy thousand copies of *Memoirs of Hecate County* had been sold—probably a larger figure than the total sales of the twelve books Edmund Wilson had previously published. If, as can be assumed, most of the seventy thousand bought the book because they had heard it was dirty, they must have been disappointed. It is as detailed as any book on the physiology of sex, but no more so, and such books are now available for less than the $2.50 the *Memoirs* costs. And it is not only less stimulating than the advertising cards in a subway train but positively anti-aphrodisiac.

To those who had not just heard about Edmund Wilson as a man who had written a smutty book, to those who had been reading him for twenty-five years, *Memoirs of Hecate County* might seem surprisingly good or quite surprisingly bad, but such readers were bound to be interested in the book because of what it disclosed regarding the author. I do not refer to its exposure of his sex habits, though that is important enough, but to the intimations of his attitude toward life.

For the constant reader of Edmund Wilson, the *Memoirs* is full of echoes. In one of the stories, for instance, the devil holds forth in French on the corruption of the Soviet Union, and you think of the Wilson who called Russia "the moral top of the world." You remember also the discourse on demons that appeared in the *New Republic* some twenty years ago and was later used in *I Thought of Daisy*. You may recall, too, that in the second version the narrator abandons the satire: "to satirize humanity was to slander it, and I no longer thought so ill of humanity." In the *Memoirs,* on the other hand, the devil is allowed to have his full say, and, what is more, he is made to seem rather likable when compared to the human beings in the book.

Although the *Memoirs* echoes every stage of Wilson's career, it carries one back most frequently to his earlier piece of fiction, and one

cannot help thinking of the different circumstances under which the two books were written. *I Thought of Daisy* appeared just as Wilson was completing his apprenticeship as a critic, just before *Axel's Castle* established his reputation. *Memoirs of Hecate County* appears when his future is dubious but his past full of glories. He wrote *I Thought of Daisy* after he had tried most of the characteristic attitudes of the '20's and believed he had worked through them to a philosophy of his own. Scarcely had it been finished when the depression turned him towards Communism, and the end of that adventure is made plain in the *Memoirs*. Between the two novels lies the ordeal of Edmund Wilson and his generation.

II

In 1932, when he was trying to explain how he happened to have become a radical, Wilson wrote an account of his family background and the experiences that had influenced his political ideas. "My grandfathers, great-grandfathers, father and uncles," he wrote,

> were almost without exception doctors, lawyers, college professors or ministers. They have all been at least comfortably well off . . . but they have none of them, by modern American standards, been particularly rich. My father's and uncle's generation were obviously alienated by their old-fashioned education from the world of the great American money-making period; they managed to do pretty well in it, but they never seemed much at home in it. . . . One of the results of this has been that I have grown up in modern prosperous America with a slightly outside point of view.

For Edmund Wilson there was a double alienation. In so far as the Hill School and Princeton reflected the values of the money-making world, he rebelled against them, but he could not turn to the learned professions as his ancestors had done, for the professions either had become subservient to business or were quite remote from the realities of contemporary American life. He got a job on a New York newspaper, hoping "to find myself in a more varied world where my keel would strike on basic realities and I should go ashore at last"; but "life in New York was college all over again." As an enlisted man in the first World War, he took some satisfaction in the distance he had put between himself and his old life, and he resolved never to return to it. "I swore to myself that when the war was over I would stand outside society altogether. I would do without the comforts and amenities of the conventional world,

and I would devote myself to the great human interests which transcended standards of living and conventions: Literature, History, the Creation of Beauty, the Discovery of Truth."

But, as he confessed, he did come back. He was managing editor of *Vanity Fair* for a time, and after 1926 an editor of the *New Republic*. In 1922 he and John Peale Bishop published a volume of parodies and satires, and in 1924 his play, *The Crime in the Whistler Room*, was produced by the Provincetown Players. For the *New Republic* he wrote about music, the theatre, and the movies, as well as about books, and did occasional satires and sketches. Some of his critical pieces seem quite as good now as they did twenty years ago, and it is common to find in them ideas that he developed a decade later.

In 1929 he published not only *I Thought of Daisy* but also a book of verse and the first of the articles that became *Axel's Castle*. It was as if, entering his thirty-fifth year, he had decided to unloose all his batteries. Neither *Poets, Farewell* nor the novel made literary history, but the essays were the most exciting event in American criticism since the appearance of Van Wyck Brooks's *Letters and Leadership*. The erudition of the man, his skill in exposition, his sensitiveness, and his flexibility were the obvious marks of a first-rate critical intelligence.

III

I Thought of Daisy was, among other things, Wilson's farewell to Bohemianism. In it he laid aside the Menckenian pose and looked on America with a new friendliness. Even American business came to seem less despicable. (There is a passage in which a professor of mathematics, who appears to be drawn from A. N. Whitehead, talks to the narrator about *Babbitt* and the possibility of a new type of business leadership.) America no longer inspired "either hatred, apprehension, or scorn." His old rebelliousness now seemed to Wilson a phase of immaturity, and acceptance of America was part of the grown man's acceptance of life.

If the bitterness with which Wilson turned against the capitalist system needs explanation, one has only to think of the tentative reconciliation that had taken place just before the depression began. He had never cared for the leaders of our business civilization, had never accepted their values, but he had grudgingly brought himself to admit that they had their place in the world. And then it appeared that he had been taken

in, for they could not maintain the prosperity that was the only justification of their existence.

When the articles on symbolism were put into book form, Wilson added a somber warning of the decay of capitalist civilization, and as soon as the book was on the press, he temporarily abandoned literary criticism in order to observe for himself the realities of American life in a period of capitalist collapse. He wrote about Detroit, the Scottsboro case, bank failures, coal miners, textile workers. The sketches appeared in the *New Republic* through 1931, and when Wilson brought them together, he called his book *The American Jitters.*

He did not stop with self-education and the education of the public. On January 14, 1931, the *New Republic* carried his "Appeal to Progressives." "In the abyss of bankruptcy and starvation into which the country has fallen," he wrote, "and with no sign of political leadership which will be able to pull us out, liberalism seems to have little to offer." The Communists, on the other hand, were preparing themselves for the seizure of power. If liberals and progressives wanted to prove that there was still some virtue in American democracy, "they must take Communism away from the Communists, and take it without ambiguities or reservations, asserting emphatically that their ultimate goal is the ownership of the means of production by the government."

While the liberals objected to the violence of Wilson's conclusions, and the Communists howled over his proposal to take Communism away from them, he continued his attack on capitalism and on any suggestion of compromise with it. He berated Walter Lippmann for describing Russian Communism as merely "another way of solving the problems we have already solved," and he snapped at Beard, Chase, and Steffens for their bourgeois inability to break clean with the capitalist system. Such book reviews as he wrote were salted with exhortations to revolution, and in 1932 he published in the *Herald-Tribune Books* articles on Marx, Flaubert, and Shaw under the general title, "Critics of the Middle Class." Despite his animadversions against the Communist Party, and the party's prompt counterattack, he began to co-operate with Communists, and there was a rumor current in the summer of 1932 that he had applied for membership. Whether or not this was true, he did sign the statement of the League of Professional Groups for Foster and Ford.

IV

In an essay on Hemingway several years later Wilson wrote:

> The progress of the Communist faith among our writers since the beginning of the depression has followed a peculiar course. That the aims and beliefs of Marx and Lenin should have come through to the minds of intellectuals who had been educated in the bourgeois tradition as great awakeners of conscience, a great light, was quite natural and highly desirable. But the conception of the dynamic Marxist will, the exaltation of the Marxist religion seized the members of the professional classes like a capricious contagion or hurricane, which shakes one and leaves his neighbor standing, then returns to lay hold of the second after the first has become quiet again. In the moment of seizure, each one of them saw a scroll unrolled from the heavens, on which Marx and Lenin and Stalin, the Bolsheviks of 1917, the Soviets of the Five-Year Plan, and the GPU of the Moscow trials were all a part of the same great purpose. Later the convert, if he were capable of it, would get over his first phase of snow blindness and learn to see real people and conditions, would study the development of Marxism in terms of nations, periods, personalities, instead of logical deductions from abstract propositions or—as in the case of the more naive or dishonest—of simple incantatory slogans. But for many there was at least a moment when the key to all the mysteries of human nature seemed suddenly to have been placed in their hands, when an infallible guide to thought and behavior seemed to have been given them in a few easy formulas.

This passage has the true autobiographical ring. Wilson was as dazzled as anyone else, and though he recovered from his snow blindness quicker than some, he had his moments of apocalyptic exaltation. One thing that helped to save him from any serious involvement in Communist politics was his basic incapacity for co-operation with any group of human beings, organized or unorganized. Soon after the elections of 1932, he established his position as an independent radical, and when he signed a letter criticizing the actions of the Communist Party in the Madison Square Garden riot of February 16, 1934, he was once more the object of Communist attack.

Wilson was also kept from some of the extravagances of the convert by the strength of his feeling for literary values. In 1931 and 1932, when he was filled with bitterness against the bourgeoisie and passion for the revolution, he saw in much of the literature he had hitherto admired signs of the decay of capitalist civilization, but that was never all that he saw. As early as 1932, when he took part in the famous Michael Gold-

Thornton Wilder controversy on Mike Gold's side, he protested against Marxist dogmatism. "A really first-rate book by an agonizing bourgeois," he wrote, "may have more human value, more revolutionary power, than second-rate Marxists who attack it." A year later he again protested against Marxist narrowness, and his protests grew stronger year by year. In defending so-called bourgeois literature by trying to demonstrate that it served the revolution, Wilson was perhaps guilty of his own kind of narrowness, but the fact remains that he would not go against his critical conscience.

The greatest factor of all in his salvation, however, was his unequivocal desire for truth. The moment that the revelatory blaze had died away, Wilson sat himself down to find out what Marxism was all about. In the autumn of 1932, while he was still clamoring for revolution, he wrote a series of articles on the precursors of Marx, thus beginning a seven years' labor. *To the Finland Station,* undertaken at the high noon of enthusiasm, was finished in the dingy hours of disillusionment. But it was finished. As the articles dragged along in the *New Republic,* four one year and six the next, they did not seem particularly distinguished, but when the book at last appeared in 1940, it stood up as one of the finest pieces of intellectual history written in our time. Wilson undertook the task in the hope of finding the ultimate truth or at least a respectable approximation thereof; he ended with a soberly critical analysis of the whole socialist tradition. When at last he brings Lenin to the Finland Station and the revolution is about to begin, this is how somberly he speaks: "Lenin is now to attempt to impose on the events of the present a pattern of actual direction which will determine the history of the future. We must not wonder if later events are not always amenable to this pattern. The point is that western man at this moment can be seen to have made some definite progress in mastering the greeds and the fears, the bewilderments, in which he has lived." But if the book fails to provide a chart for social action, it is a magnificent study of the development of a pattern of ideas, full of brilliantly dramatic writing and stubbornly honest analysis.

Wilson sought the truth in the land of Communism as well as in books. Although he had quarreled with the Communist Party early in the game, he continued to believe in the Soviet Union as an example of socialism, and his predisposition, when he went to Russia in the spring

of 1935, was friendly. He was not unfriendly when he left, and the report on the USSR in *Travels in Two Democracies* is predominantly favorable. Yet, though he spoke of the Soviet Union as "the moral top of the world," he made such comments as, "The glorification of Stalin is undoubtedly one of the things in Russia which affects an American most unpleasantly," and, "The atmosphere of fear and suspicion is really pretty oppressive." After his return he wrote "The Man in the Mirror," a parable of universal suspiciousness, and within a year or two he was referring to Russia as a police state.

V

Despite the acuteness of his disillusionment, Wilson tried to remain judicious in his attitude toward the Soviet Union. In a piece that denounced the falsification of history in the Soviet Union, he mentioned "the executive abilities of Stalin" and the "practical achievements of the Soviets under his leadership." Another article, published in 1938, took issue with certain left-wing critics of the USSR on the ground that they had expected to find in Russia all the benefits of western industrialism plus the virtues of socialism. "It is quite obvious," he wrote, "that the Soviet Union has developed a new class stratification; but this phenomenon should be studied, not denounced. . . . It also seems obvious that the Stalinist administration has become definitely reactionary and corrupt. . . . But even assuming the worst, there is no point in getting indignant about it. . . . The situation deserves sympathetic but soberly sociological attention."

All this time Wilson was going doggedly ahead with *To the Finland Station,* though his heart was no longer in the task. In 1938 he published a volume of critical essays, *The Triple Thinkers,* which F. O. Matthiessen described as the work of a disturbed and disillusioned radical. One of the essays in the volume was a modified version of the article on Flaubert that appeared in *Books* back in 1932, and, comparing the versions, one noted that Wilson had grown more tentative in his use of Marxist methods of analysis and that he had become interested in Flaubert's distrust of the "authoritarian aims of the socialists." It was true that the essay on Marxism and literature, while depreciating the current practitioners of Marxist criticism, did try to salvage something of Marxism, but the most eloquent essay in the book was that in praise of John Jay Chapman's intransigent

individualism, and, as Matthiessen pointed out, the volume placed Wilson in the Emersonian tradition.

To the Finland Station was finished in 1940. In that year Wilson published a long essay on Dickens and some pieces on Cain, O'Hara, Steinbeck, and others, which bore the collective title, "The Boys in the Back Room." In 1941 he edited a special supplement of the *New Republic* on American writing, with a foreword rather more optimistic than the contents deserved. His own contribution was an essay on the psychological origins of art, "The Wound and the Bow," which gave its title to a volume of essays that appeared later that year. The Colt Press, which had published *The Boys in the Back Room* as a book, in 1942 issued *Note-Books of Night,* a collection of poems, parodies, satires, and prose sketches, some of them going as far back as 1926.

The course of Wilson's political thinking during these years is difficult to follow. In January, 1938, he joined a group of liberals and socialists in protesting against the *Nation's* support of collective security, and, so far as I know, he never expressed approval of American participation in the war. In 1940, when Archibald MacLeish wrote "The Irresponsibles," Wilson, who had already taken a knife to MacLeish in a malicious parody, commented bitterly on MacLeish's hysterical demand for the suppression of doubts and criticisms. He wrote in defense of Lyons, Stolberg, and Eastman, whose disillusionment with the Soviet Union had preceded his own. But, while his bitterness against Russia grew, he became no friendlier toward capitalism. According to John Chamberlain, Wilson once said to Benjamin Stolberg, "The difference between us is that you have become a Republican while I am still a socialist."

Although Wilson had never lost his sense of literary values, even when his interest in politics was keenest, his disillusionment with political parties on the left had the effect of restoring literature to the center of his interests. He wrote a piece for the *Nation* in which he lamented that the younger generation did not read for pleasure but only for ammunition in partisan warfare. His criticism, moreover, displayed less and less interest in Marxism. As is shown by the admirable essays on Dickens and Kipling in *The Wound and the Bow,* he still found the Marxist analysis of class relationships usable, but it touched on matters that seemed to him of only secondary importance. The thesis of the title essay is psychological, and it is with the mind of the individual writer that the book is concerned.

Wilson's isolation became increasingly apparent. Whether he was opposed to America's involvement in the war or merely indifferent, he felt himself detached from the intellectuals who were backing the government and, of course, from the majority of the people. He had no political ties and no way of working against an economic system he detested. Moreover, he ceased writing for the *New Republic* in 1941, after some twenty years of association with it, and there was no magazine that he could look upon as his organ. It was in this period that he wrote some of the stories that were published in *Memoirs of Hecate County,* and he prepared an excellent anthology, *The Shock of Recognition.* With this kind of writing, and with some lecturing at colleges, he kept busy enough, but at the very peak of his reputation he was homeless.

VI

At the beginning of 1944 the problem was partly solved, and solved in a surprising way. The *New Yorker,* which had lost the services of Clifton Fadiman, certainly the country's slickest reviewer, acquired the services of Edmund Wilson, the country's best critic. Although it was soon apparent that Wilson was not wholly at ease on the *New Yorker,* and that the editors were equally uneasy about him, he did at least have a place in which he could comment regularly on current books.

There is a group, perhaps a large group, of *New Yorker* readers who have never reconciled themselves to the loss of Fadiman. Along with other gifts, Fadiman had a sure sense of what *New Yorker* readers wanted to know about books, and after his polished reporting, they were disconcerted by Wilson's erudite digressions, his lapses into bitterness, and his inability to write amusing comments on whatever trivialities a week's publishing might bring to his desk. For his part, Wilson felt himself obliged to review a certain number of books in which he had only slight interest, and he found few opportunities for the kind of literary discussion that at one time he had contributed regularly to the *New Republic.* Yet he did turn in forty-four pieces in the course of a year, none of them negligible. In addition to six or seven first-rate reviews, such as his comment on Van Wyck Brooks's *Age of Washington Irving,* he did some amusing and unconventional articles—his affectionate piece on magic, for example, and his attack on the cult of the mystery story. Some readers

came to prefer Wilson's occasional flashes of lightning to the steadier illumination furnished by Fadiman.

After 1944, Wilson seldom wrote more than once a fortnight for the *New Yorker*. The juxtaposition of his work with that of other reviewers called attention to the authority with which he wrote. He could make mistakes as well as the next one, as in his high praise for *Cass Timberlane* or his unaccountable belittling of Carson McCullers' *The Member of the Wedding,* but he was never superficial, and now and then a book—for instance, John De Forest's *A Volunteer's Adventures*—gave him a chance to show how formidable his critical resources were.

Wilson's visit to Europe in the spring and summer of 1945 was no more unqualified a success, from the *New Yorker's* point of view, than his book reviewing. The long interim between his first article and his second suggested that something had gone wrong, and when the articles did begin to appear regularly, they were not in the tradition of "Reporter at Large" brightness. On the other hand, readers of the *New Yorker* learned what readers of the *New Republic* had known back in the early '30's, that Wilson was both an accomplished and an unpretentious journalist. He was forthright in his criticisms of British and American policy in Greece, but he was at his best in his incidental remarks on Greek women, Minoan culture, the Greek landscape, and similar matters.

Memoirs of Hecate County appeared in the spring of 1946, and reviewers agreed only with regard to the clinical candor of one of the stories—which was enough for seventy thousand purchasers. That Wilson's fiction is not so pre-eminently good as his criticism goes without saying, and yet it has its own kind of interest and importance. The shorter stories are all in their various ways tours de force. One of them, "Ellen Terhune," is a successful experiment in Jamesian ambiguity, and three are satires, "The Milhollands' Damned Soul" being the most savage and the funniest. As for the long and by now notorious story, "The Princess with the Golden Hair," it is almost as extraordinary a study in solipsism as Proust's *The Captive,* from which it may derive. (On another level, of course, it derives from personal experience; internal evidence indicates that it is autobiographical, and there are traces of "Anna" in Wilson's writings of the middle '30's.) Whether the narrator is documenting the "cold-blooded concupiscence" of the first stages of seduction, analyzing

his romantic passion for Imogen, or seeking in Anna a reflection of "the people," he alone exists. Yet, as Wilson once said about Proust's Albertine episode, there is in this record a devastating truthfulness that will not be denied. The narrator's loss of Anna is genuinely pathetic, not, as he supposes, because she has enabled him to escape from the bourgeois limitations of Hecate County, but because for once there had been a warm, human relationship in his life.

John Chamberlain holds that *Memoirs of Hecate County* is from start to finish an attack on capitalism, and the values of a commercial society do come in for considerable manhandling. But if Wilson has grown no friendlier toward capitalism, he has become a strange kind of socialist. It is, indeed, hard to see what remains of his socialism except his refusal to acquiesce in the evils of capitalism. He would probably agree with Chamberlain's assertion that all forms of social organization have their pathological aspects, but he refuses to make this an excuse for smugness. On the other hand, he will not accept the neoliberal faith in easy remedies. If pessimism is the price of integrity, he stands ready to pay it.

VII

When *Poets, Farewell* appeared in 1929, the publishers released a sketch of Wilson's young, sharp, poetic profile. Years went by, and if a different picture of Wilson appeared, I do not remember it. Then suddenly there was a photograph of a heavy-faced, middle-aged man with a stubborn mouth and arrogant, resentful eyes. Of the picture one young acquaintance of mine said what another young acquaintance said of *Memoirs of Hecate County:* "What a mean son of a bitch Edmund Wilson must be!"

I have met Wilson only once, in the autumn of 1942, when he was lecturing at Smith College and I happened to visit Newton Arvin. At dinner with Arvin and me Wilson was polite and at times even cordial, but withdrawn and a little absent-minded. I remember that he talked vehemently for a few minutes about the necessity of being hard-boiled in dealing with publishers, but for the most part Arvin and I had to hunt for topics of conversation. As is natural in circumstances that do not permit of much ease, we mentioned various persons known to all of us,

and as Wilson commented on these individuals, his remarks were almost without exception bitter and destructive. I quickly found that I could not argue with him, partly, I admit, because there was always a degree of truth in what he said, partly because he was so much more emphatic and overbearing than there seemed any need of being at a dinner table. As he left for his lecture—starting off, Arvin said, in the wrong direction—I was relieved.

A couple of years ago Wilson had the following form prepared for use on suitable occasions:

Edmund Wilson regrets that it is impossible for him

	read manuscripts,
	contribute to books or periodicals,
	do editorial work,
	judge literary contests,
without compensation to	give educational courses,
	deliver lectures,
	address meetings,
	make after-dinner speeches,
	broadcast;
	contribute to or take part in symposiums, take part in chain poems or other collective compositions,
	contribute manuscripts for sales,
	donate copies of his books to libraries,
under any circumstances to	autograph books for strangers,
	supply personal information about himself,
	supply photographs of himself,
	allow his name to be used on letterheads,
	receive unknown persons who have no apparent business with him.

This is no pose of arrogance, such as Shaw has found so useful for publicity purposes; it is the angry snarl of a man to whom the petty annoyances of the writing business have become an outrageous insult.

In his early autobiographical essay Wilson spoke of "small family inheritances," and it seems clear that he has had a larger degree of finan

cial independence than most of his contemporaries and that this has helped to protect him against the grosser kinds of temptation. Perhaps his record would be just as clean if he had had to choose between material well-being and his intransigence, but the fact that he has not had to make that choice may account for his intolerance towards sinners. A dreadful righteousness has completed his isolation. *New Yorker* readers who don't like his work are always pointing out that he has no sense of humor. What is worse is the absence of any suggestion in his recent work of enduring relationships with other human beings.

In *I Thought of Daisy* the narrator learns "that any great strength or excellence of character must be, by its very nature, incompatible with qualities of other kinds—that it carries with it weaknesses and ignominies inseparable from excellence and strength." The passage foreshadows the thesis of *The Wound and the Bow*—"the idea that genius and disease, like strength and mutilation, may be inextricably bound up together." The parable of Philoctetes, however, does not go far enough, for it fails to suggest the way in which the exercise of the bow exacerbates the wound. Not only have Wilson's weaknesses and ignominies become more apparent as he has grown in excellence and strength; the development of his talents has been paid for by the deformation of his character. In the "dreadful isolation of the artist," from which he once hoped to escape, the ulcer suppurates and stinks.

Of course a price always has to be paid for integrity, but the price is higher in some periods than in others. Wilson is learned and honest and in every way an admirable critic, but that is not the whole story. A man who occasionally sees Van Wyck Brooks on the Westport train once asked me, "What is that man afraid of?" Seeing Wilson, one would ask, "Who does that man think he is?" or, catching him in a mood of abstraction, "Where does he think he is?" When he looks at the world, his expression is hostile, but most of the time he looks within, and one can only guess at what he sees.

A STORY

THE GESTURE

By PAUL SELVIN

When John Akon slit the envelope a brightly colored little folder fluttered down like an injured butterfly. He stooped and retrieved it from the thick rug. He was standing near a window and a beam of sunlight fell directly on the folder in his hand. The sharply printed letters in white along the top stood out boldly: "An Appeal To You." Beneath the printing was a picture of an old woman in rags. She was sitting on the ground, her legs fully extended with the soles of her bare feet showing dirty and cracked; there was an empty, battered pan in her lap; her hair was badly matted; her look was resigned, beaten. "All Over The World . . ." a line of heavy type read at the bottom of the glossy cover, inviting him by its incompleteness to open the folder. He did so, though he knew what it would be: another appeal for charity. He glanced briefly at the open two-page spread, a neat design of squarely printed paragraphs each headed by the name of the country whose destitution was described therein. He was about to drop the folder into the wastebasket when he noticed that one paragraph was headed "Africa." He read the few prosaic sentences: Africa too needed help and would receive its share from this organization; especially needy were certain sections of North Africa. Nothing more. The next section was headed "India."

It comes out of income tax anyway, John Akon thought. He sat down at his desk and opened his checkbook. Carefully he filled in everything but the amount of money. He thought for a moment; then he wrote, "Fifty and 00/100—." But when he had blotted the check and was about to tear it from the book it seemed to him that the water-stained design on the dull blue paper swirled and faded, and that looking at him through the inked "Fifty" was a little girl. . . .

* * *

In Casablanca the camp area had been fenced in, but along the street, staring through the iron fence, the Arabs had stood begging for food the Americans did not eat. The soldiers had thrust their mess kits through

the fence and emptied the remains of their meal and their leftover coffee into the cans the Arabs carried. If an Arab had only one tin can, the coffee was poured in with the refuse food he had accumulated. The cans were dirty and rusty and the food in them, dried pancakes, cold corned beef, was soggy and messy-looking, like garbage.

Then the company had moved by forty-and-eight to Constantine, a thousand miles away, and every time the train had stopped on the seven-day journey the Arabs had gathered for food. They stood by the garbage cans which the cooks set up along the tracks, and when they were allowed scooped the soldiers' mess kits clean with their bare hands. Their hands were dirty, their feet were bare, their teeth were bad. Sergeant Akon wondered if it would be like this everywhere in Africa. He found these people and this strange land more fascinating than the war he was going to. The talk on the troop train was that the Americans had just lost a costly battle at a place called Kasserine Pass, and that Constantine was now the last American-held railhead. (The men were in an ordnance company, and their talk exaggerated their danger.) But he did not think of the war, he thought of Africa and thrilled to the sharp lines of the rugged mountains and the evenness of the airbrush colors.

At the railroad station in Constantine they piled into six-by-six's. The intriguing city, sliced by deep gorges across which were spider-like suspension bridges, was in the middle of steep and impressive mountains. In the narrow streets the French, in worn European clothing, and the Arabs, in long dirty robes, watched the small convoy in silence. They drove to the far side of the city, then slowly climbed a narrow road which twisted and turned until they came out on a mountainside high above the city. There they piled out of the trucks, and the first thing Sergeant Akon saw was a group of Arab children huddled together watching the soldiers. The children looked as though they had been waiting for the Americans to arrive.

It was raining now, and the wind was cutting with a penetrating rawness that made him shiver. He zipped his field jacket tighter about his neck and dragged his barracks bag and other gear from the truck. Below him the houses and streets and bridges of the city looked like toys, and the steep, rugged mountains, grey and green, were jumbled together like an El Greco painting. He turned and joined the rest of the company,

marvelling that this wet, cold land was Africa. The name had always conjured up sunlight and deserts; it never would any more.

The men scattered on the hillside and unrolled packs and put up pup tents. The Arab kids watched them in silence. Akon worked with another sergeant, driving in the tent pegs with the butt of his rifle and digging a shallow rain trench with his bayonet. On the ground inside the small tent he placed his raincoat, and upon it he spread an empty mattress cover, some extra clothing, and a blanket. Above these he tucked in a second blanket and his overcoat. Then he placed his barracks bag and gear in the forward closed triangle of the tent and took up his mess kit.

It was dark now, with no moon nor any light from the city below them, and the men shuffled about restlessly until the kitchen was ready with coffee and corned beef. Then, tired, unwashed, wet and cold, they filed through the feed lines and stood with shoulders hunched under the dripping trees. They ate in silence, and the Arab kids, who had moved over as a group to the garbage pails, stood quietly in an open spot in the rain and watched them. By the flickering light of the fires under the wash cans Akon could see them barefooted and in rags, shivering in the cold. He remembered the other Arab groups which had waited for their garbage in Casablanca and at all the way stations, and he wondered if any other American army unit had camped here or if the kids knew by instinct where to stand. He was hungry, but he could not eat all he had taken; the beef was unappetizing, the coffee was getting cold. He made his way carefully among the other soldiers in the dark, paused before the Arabs and poured the remains of his coffee into an outstretched can. He let a second kid scoop up the beef from his mess kit. Then he washed his gear and went back to his tent.

It was pitch black away from the kitchen fires. There were no candles and he had no flashlight. "Might as well get under this," the voice of the sergeant with whom he had pitched the tent said. "Nothing to do but try to keep warm and sleep." Fully clothed, including his field jacket, he crawled into the small tent, turned over on his back and with difficulty took off his water-soaked shoes. His feet were cold, and he rubbed them between his hands for a few moments; he left his socks on. Then he slipped between the damp blankets and resettled his overcoat on top of himself. He had to lie with his legs fully extended, he did not have room

to curl up as he usually did. Beside him the blurred form of the other sergeant muttered something inane about feather beds, and from the darkness outside the tent came the sharp *clack* of the last mess gear banging against the garbage pail. A little later he heard the muffled sounds of men all about him getting into their tents. Far to his right somebody cursed that it was just his luck to get guard duty on a night like this, and from the kitchen tent an angry voice called, "And chase those kids out of here. They'll walk off with the whole kitchen tonight if we don't get 'em out of the area." He heard feet squashing in the mud outside the tent, and the drip of water from the leaves overhead. The motor of a truck swore into angry life and roared away, and then the steady fall of the rain was all he heard. February in Africa in the mountains was just as cold as it was in New England, but in New England the Americans slept in beds in warm houses and there were no Arabs, barefooted and wet, begging food at the garbage pails.

* * *

In the morning the sharp call of the bugle woke him early. It was very dark. When he raised his head to look out of the tent he could distinguish nothing. He could feel the rawness and dampness in the air, and the chill of it swirled about his neck. He listened for a moment. The rain had stopped. No one was getting up. He nuzzled his head deep in the blankets again and resettled his stiff body. He dozed off quickly, and half an hour later the rattling of mess kits woke him again. The erratic, tinny sound of the gear carried in a hurry past his tent seemed to have brought the dawn too: it was grey outside now. Through the opening at his feet he could make out the trees and the other tents of the company scattered upon the hill like mysterious grey-green mounds.

He drew his feet up, folding his legs as though they were the legs of a folding chair, and got out from under the blanket. He saw now that the entire left side of his "bed" was muddy and wet: he had turned in the night and knocked out some of the pegs on his side of the tent. He pulled the edge of his blanket and coat out of the water, then lay on his back on top of the blankets and clothes and put on his shoes; they were stiff and cold. When he stretched his legs now they extended well outside the tent. He sat up carefully and worked his buttocks towards the opening, then stood up outside the tent. His bones ached, his back was stiff. He felt chilly at once and noticed that when he exhaled his breath was

a white cloud that rose quickly with the wind and swirled away. He bent down and picked up his overcoat and put it on over his field jacket. He tensed himself to stop shivering, then took his hat and mess gear and crossed the torn area to the chow line. With shoulders hunched and teeth clamped to prevent his chattering he shuffled through the line, then made his way to the back of a truck parked nearby. He set his gear upon the extended tailboard. He noticed that the kids were again at the garbage pail. He wondered how long they had been there. He reflected that they looked like part of the scenery, as though they had never gone away.

There were a dozen children, none more than eleven years of age, standing near the crest of the hill so that they were sharply etched against the grey sky. He was not more than eight yards from them, and over the edge of his steaming cup as he drank his coffee he studied them. He had a precise mind, and he noted that seven of them were barefooted, three were wearing dirty sandals, two had torn and oversized European shoes. Four—three girls and one boy—wore an outer dress cut from an American mattress cover. The bag-like garments, though thin and dirty, were whole. The others were not as fortunate: the pants the boys wore were ripped, especially at the pockets, and parts of their thighs, dirty and brown and goose-pimpled with cold, were exposed. Two had jackets over thin shirts, and one had a torn, woolen sweater, much too large for him and pock-marked with holes, the sleeves stringy where the original owner's elbows had been. Three boys wore nothing over their shirts, though one had a dirty woolen cap on his head, the kind soldiers wore under their helmets. As for the girls, the thin, torn dresses of all of them but one were too large, so that though the dresses had no sleeves the cloth at the shoulders draped over the children's arms almost to their elbows. In their hands all held rusty cans, the size of those in which you get tomatoes or sauerkraut in the States. Three of the boys had two cans apiece—the wealthy ones, Akon thought. Some of the boys, thrusting their cans at the soldiers approaching the garbage pails, talked excitedly in guttural Arabic, but the girls were silent.

Akon washed down the last of his eggs and biscuits. He felt better now. He lit a cigarette and went towards the wash cans. As he passed them, all the children looked at him. He shrugged his shoulders and showed his empty cup and plate, as though by the gesture of the empty gear he was telling them, "I'd give you some, but you can see there's none

left to give." He did not know why he felt compelled to explain this to them.

Then he noticed that one girl, slightly smaller than the rest, was standing a bit apart from the others. She was the one whose dress was too small for her. The thin cloth flapping about the fragile body in the wind did not reach her knees, and Akon could see her skin there hard and blue and cracked. She did not seem to be wearing anything under the flimsy dress, and he was startled by the violence of her shivering: all her limbs were shaking from the cold. He studied her as he washed his gear. Her skin was clear, her face was well-proportioned. On her forehead, just above the bridge of her nose, was an Arabic tatoo in blue. She could not be more than six or seven years old. She was thoroughly pathetic.

Feeling self-conscious and rather foolish, but unwilling to admit to himself that he was sentimental, he went back to the food table and filled his cup with hot coffee again. He made a pretense of drinking some of it, then went toward the wash line and walked over to the little girl and poured his coffee into her can. She looked at him without a word, then extended the fingers of both her hands around the tin to feel the warmth of the liquid. He rinsed his cup and went back to his tent. The company would be setting up for operation, he told himself, and he had a lot to do.

By the noon meal the group of Arab kids had grown from twelve to twenty. This time Akon had some beef left over and he let the small girl scoop it into her can. He noticed she was shivering as violently as she had at dawn; her fragile shoulders and thin arms shook as though she had no control over them. He wondered if she had stood by the cans all morning in the drizzle, or if she had left the area between the two meals, but he did not ask her. Vaguely he thought to himself that she ought to have a sweater and some shoes, but he did not pause to speak with her.

Late in the afternoon the drizzle stopped, and at the evening meal there were thirty Arab kids in the area. They had been herded behind a rope several feet from the garbage cans to keep them out of the soldiers' way. They held their tins over the rope, and the soldiers passing by gave them their leftovers. Akon, above the gutteral pleas of several of the boys, singled out the small girl and gave her what was left in his mess kit. He poured the remains of his coffee out for her too; the sight of the resultant mixture of hash and brown liquid in the same can turned his stomach.

He washed his mess gear, walked back to the kitchen tent and asked one of the cooks for an empty can. Going to the group of Arab kids again he motioned to the girl and gave her the tin he had just acquired. With gestures and bad French he explained to her that she was to use one can for coffee, the other for food. Then he took her by the arm and led her to the middle of the group of children and by gestures indicated to her that henceforth she was to stand in the front of the crowd, so that she would receive more food. He did not know if she understood him, for she said nothing. The other Arab children watched his performance in silence, but with obvious envy and increased respect for the girl. Two soldiers who knew him made some ribald remarks, but he ignored them. He felt he ought to obtain some more food for the child, but instead a harsh voice within him said, "You've done enough," and he turned brusquely on his heel as though wishing to forget what he had done and walked quickly away from the kitchen area.

Later, after he had wriggled between his blankets, he lay quietly in the dark, his eyes open, thoroughly awake. After a while he turned over on his stomach, groped in the blackness, and pulled his barracks bag down beside him. He opened the top of the bag and thrust his hand into the matted clothing. He searched with his hand blindly until he felt some heavy wool which was obviously different from the army textures of the rest of his clothing. He pulled the cloth out and placed it under his head. Then he jammed everything back into the bag and stood it up out of the way. He would give the child the heavy scarf his mother had sent him some time ago, he thought. He had no need for it, might as well give it to someone who could use it.

In the morning he draped the scarf about his shoulders over his overcoat. When he had eaten he went through the chow line for seconds, accumulating a handful of biscuits in addition to powdered eggs and coffee. The child, her limbs still shaking with cold, was in front of the crowd, where he had told her to stand, and she had both cans in her hands. She looked at him with the faintest sign of recognition, not a smile but a quick look that showed she remembered him. He gave her the food, placing what biscuits he could in a torn pocket of her dress. Most of the crackers would not fit in the pocket, and he dropped them into the rusty tin with the eggs. Then he took the scarf from about his shoulders and wrapped it around her neck. *"Pour vous,"* he said. "For

you. Warm." He patted it against her sunken chest and repeated stupidly, as though believing that repetition alone would make her understand a foreign language, "Warm, warm." He was irritated that he could not remember the appropriate French word, and he felt ill at ease, as though this public act of kindness had suddenly stripped him naked before strangers. The child said nothing, and he turned brusquely away again, avoiding the glances of the other Arab children, who had been watching with envious whispers.

For the next two days he gave her his leftover food after every meal. He noticed that she wore the scarf at all times, but that someone had pinned it on her so that it covered more of her body than it had when he had put it on her originally. The sight of her bare feet haunted him, and he caught himself again wondering what he could give her for shoes. He had nothing that would fit her, but on the evening of the second day he gave her some torn stockings and tried to make her understand that he wished her to take them home. Perhaps the person who had fixed the scarf could think of a way to utilize the stockings.

After breakfast on the third day she followed him back to his tent. At first he did not notice her, and it was only after he had put his mess gear away and filled his helmet with water that he saw her standing nearby watching him. She was silent, and he did not know what to say to her or how to treat her. Finally he took his woolen cap from his helmet liner, approached her with a smile, and placed it on her head.

"Pour vous," he said, using the same phrase with which he had given her the scarf.

For the first time she spoke. *"Merci,"* she whispered shyly.

He did not know why, but he felt a delightful shock. He felt that he had triumphed over something which, though intangible, was extremely powerful: this alien child had finally spoken to him, she had thanked him; his kindness had finally broken through to her. He stooped and balanced on his haunches before her and summoned up all his prep-school French. *"Comment appelez-vous?"* he asked gently, and then, not knowing why he added it, but repeating the English as though it increased the possibility of her understanding him, he said, "What is your name? How do you call yourself? What is your name? *Comment appelez-vous?"*

For a moment she was silent. Then she said in a very low voice, *"Julie."*

"What? *Comment appelez-vous?*" he repeated quickly, as though trying to hold something which was slipping through his fingers.

Once more she was silent; then she said the name again, *"Julie."*

"C'est un bel nom," he said enthusiastically. *"Julie."* He nodded his head and smiled at her. *"Où est votre mère?* Where is your mother, Julie?"

She looked at him blankly.

He tried again, repeating the words exactly. But she said nothing. He asked her how old she was. She did not answer. Then he was at a complete loss. After a few moments of looking at her in silence, he stood up and stepped over to his tent. He dug into the pocket of his knapsack and came back to her with a bar of candy. *"Pour vous,"* he repeated, putting the candy in her hand and smiling sheepishly again. This time she did not thank him, and feeling the futility of attempting to speak with her, and not completely understanding his own interest in the child, he stood up and went back to his helmet. As he washed and shaved he glanced at her out of the corner of his eye. She was standing quietly nearby watching him. When he was through shaving and had put his field jacket on again, he knelt before her once more. She did not respond to his questions, and finally he tried to explain to her that he had to go to work elsewhere now and that he would be back at noon time, when they would eat again. He did not know whether she understood him, and he left her standing by the tent when he went to the work area.

Thereafter she tried to be near him after every meal. Several times when he spoke to her, questioning her in an endeavor to learn more about her, she answered him in a burst of Arbaic. He could not understand her, of course, and after every such outburst she was silent for a long time. She said only three words in French to him. Frequently now she said *"Merci"* when he gave her something, and every time he asked her name she answered *"Julie,"* as though the set question and answer comprised a game between them. The third word she said only once, and then as though she had been told to repeat it, pronouncing with difficulty the syllables which were obviously alien to her tongue. The word was *"grand-mère,"* and she said it once when he asked her again where her mother was. With a flash of imagination he was convinced that her mother was dead and that the child lived with an only grandmother. But even as the

thought occurred to him, he knew that he would never know for certain, and later when he left her and thought about it some more he accused himself of being maudlin and sentimental.

* * *

Ten days after they had arrived in Constantine the company received orders to move forward to Tebessa. Late in the afternoon they loaded their trucks, and after supper in the dusk with the crowd of Arabs watching silently they tore down their kitchen. The men packed their barracks bags and cleaned the area. In the morning the pup tents would be taken down, the men would roll their packs, and after a cold breakfast the convoy would rumble away and the hillside would be left bare again.

Akon thought vaguely that perhaps he ought to ask the girl to take him to her home, so that he could see where and how she lived. But it was drizzling again and he decided nothing would be accomplished by his meeting the rest of her family. He had nothing more to give them, he still could not understand what had made him so generous toward the child, what had fostered their strange relationship. It was true that he had been deeply touched by her obviously complete destitution—he shivered in sympathy as he remembered the sight of her shaking, fragile body on the bleak hill beside the garbage cans—but he had been just as greatly surprised at his own kindness. He looked at her standing a few yards away watching him, her back to a fire. *"Julie!"* he called. She had gotten so that she came to him when he beckoned. *"Allez ici."*

He knelt before her. He felt obligated to explain to her that because of the war it was necessary for him to move on, to leave her. He was convinced now that she did not really understand French, yet he always felt he had to speak to her in that language. Patiently he told her that in the morning he and the other Americans would go away and not return. "And so you see," he ended lamely, "it is not my fault. *C'est la guerre.* You come here in the morning and I will give you some more things." He patted her on the shoulder and by signs tried to make sure that she understood that he wished to see her in the morning, though he knew that she would be there anyway, without his telling her. He did not know what he could give her which would permanently take his place. Finally, upset and irritated, he said, motioning for her to leave, "Now you go home. It's time to go to sleep." He watched her as she walked away in the darkness in the mud, and then he crept into his pup tent.

In the morning the trucks were lined up on the road, and the hillside, except for the trampled ground and the web of shallow rain ditches, looked just as it had when they had first arrived. Below them in the grey valley was the city, cold and alien in the persistent drizzle. Once more Akon knelt before the child. "Well," he said with feigned cheerfulness, "we're leaving now, Julie."

Most of the men were already in the trucks, and the motors were coughing now. He heard the last of the barracks bags being thrown into the trucks, the scraping of GI shoes on metal.

He put another pair of torn socks in her hand. "Warm," he smiled. *"Pour vous."* Then he gave her two bars of candy and a package of gum which he had been saving. "It is necessary that you take care of yourself well," he said in French. She said nothing.

"Better hop on, Akon," someone called behind him.

He patted her shoulder, knowing he was completely inadequate to express what he felt, realizing bitterly and with deep frustration that he could give her nothing that would be lasting protection against the hunger and the cold. Whatever he did, whatever he said or gave to her, would be merely a gesture, inadequate, transitory. He stood up and climbed into the back of the truck where he had previously thrown his pack. She stood barefooted in the mud looking up at him. She looked grotesque with the soiled army cap on her head and the heavy woolen scarf pinned about her like a drape. He compressed his lips, inexplicably feeling that he was deserting her. He twisted about and undid the top of his pack and took out two of the three cans of food he had there. *"Julie, pour vous,"* he said, and dropped them in the mud at her feet. She picked them up and looked at him. The truck started, and he was carried away. He waved at her; she did not respond.

Another American unit might move to the hillside and she could beg food from them, but eventually there would be no unit there. Already she looked forlorn and deserted on the grey hill, and the cans she held seemed even more fragile than her thin hands. He dug quickly into his pack again and tossed the third can back at her. *"Pour vous,"* he called again. But he knew he was merely trying to salve his conscience; throwing the last can to her solved nothing for her or for the other children on the hill. He would see them always, he knew he could never give them

enough, and he knew that though he was not to blame for it he would always be haunted by the sight of their emaciated bodies.

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As he tore it along the perforation from his book the check he had just written made a noise like the zipper of a field jacket. He sat looking at it. The child's face was still there, looking at him through the "Fifty." Shaking his head as though trying to escape from his imagination, he tore the check in two, then tore the pieces again and dropped them into the waste basket. He made out a second check. "One hundred and 00/100—" he wrote, and as his pen moved across the smooth paper his lips said the familiar words. *"Pour vous."* But he knew, sitting there in his warm room before the fine desk that again it was just a gesture. The child was probably dead, and there were millions like her dying. The war had moved on and left her on a cold hillside with empty, rusty cans in her hands. The world was moving on and leaving the others. It wasn't his fault, but he felt guilty and he shivered.

A NOTE ON THE BUSINESSMAN AND THE HISTORIAN

By DANIEL AARON

In 1937, N. S. B. Gras, Professor of Business History at the Harvard School of Business Administration, and a group of his colleagues, published a joint article on the literature of business history.[1] In addition to commenting on the contests and qualities of a number of books in the field, Professor Gras and his associates described what they considered to be the proper functions of the business historian and roundly criticized the amateurs and sensationalists who colored their stories and betrayed an unscholarly bias. Business history, they said—in contradistinction to muckraking—is "a study of the service business has rendered to society and of the advantages that have accrued to businessmen." Although they expressed no objection to including some of the less flattering features of business enterprise, they condemned the "socialists and social reconstructionists" who have seen all business as exploitation.

Several years ago, Dr. Henrietta Larson—one of the coauthors of the above-mentioned article and author of an excellent biography of Jay Cooke—wrote an essay bearing the ominous title, "Danger in Business History,"[2] in which she further outlined the duties of the business historian and berated in even harsher terms the irresponsible practitioners.

Dr. Larson was inspired to write this piece after reading a speech by Dr. Stanley Pargellis, librarian of Chicago's Newberry Library, on "The Judgment of History on American Business."[3] Dr. Pargellis, corroborating the suspicions of Professor Gras and Dr. Larson, had shown quite conclusively that in general American social historians did not regard business enterprise, as practiced in this country for the past seventy-five

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[1]N. S. B. Gras and others, "The Literature of Business History," *Harvard Business Review*, XVI (1937), 105.

[2]*Harvard Business Review*, XXII (1944), 316-327.

[3](A Newcomen Address, 1943).

years, in a very favorable light, and that their distortions were having a marked influence on public opinion.

> I suggest [he wrote] that the scores of American historians who write about the unfulfilled promises of American life are creating, or have already created, a conviction about American business in the minds of those who read their books, or come in other ways within the circle of their influence. The historians themselves of course possess that conviction, support it by documents and reinforce it by logic and by art. Its ingredients might be summarized as four: Business today, as for the last 75 years, is guided by but one motive, which is not, save indirectly, the public welfare; business exercises now, as it did then, a disproportionate and sinister influence on courts and government officials; business is still wasteful, immoral, corrupt, vicious and scheming, and the common man needs protection against it; business must therefore be compelled by political action to change its ways or it will stand, as it has always stood, in the path of the plain people.

Dr. Pargellis suggested among other things that a more correct interpretation of business history would result if the business firms would make their records available to sound and reliable historians whose main source of information, at present, are the reports of investigating committees and the records of individuals and groups hostile to business.[4]

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[4] Many firms have been extremely reluctant in the past to turn over company records to the investigating historian—and not without reason. Even the most unsentimental of historians might feel obligated to deal with episodes in the history of a business which company officials would prefer to leave unrecorded. Dr. Pargellis, in attempting to assuage the fears of business executives, has correctly pointed out that a firm which denies the historian access to necessary materials and forces him to rely upon newspapers and the hostile reports of government investigating committees will stand to gain less than the business which co-operates with the reputable historian, yet business—with of course some notable exceptions—remains chary.

The writer knows of the case of one historian who happened to see some early records of a very large company in a large American city. These particular documents made perfectly clear that the company, or rather the founder of the company, had engaged in what we should regard today as highly unethical practices. The historian in question, for other reasons, did not write the history of the company, but the situation presents an interesting problem. Should we expect the company, in the interests of honest business scholarship, to allow this information to be made public? It may be argued that such information, judiciously assessed and placed in its proper perspective by the scrupulous historian, will not endanger the reputation of the company. But it is quite understandable that company officials should not regard the matter so philosophically.

Dr. Larson seconded these conclusions, but she also gave additional reasons why otherwise respectable historians (like Thomas L. Cochrane and William Miller,[5] for instance) were misinterpreting business, and she offered further recommendations as well for making business history "true and realistic."

According to Dr. Larson, the historian's hostility to business, when it was not prompted by sheer dishonesty, grew out of his failure to ascertain the nature and function of business enterprise. The gulf dividing the scholar from the businessman made such an understanding difficult in the first place, but scholarship was also partly to blame. Economic theory for the past 250 years never gave sufficient attention to the importance of administrative technique; it neglected the difficulties growing out of planning and control which successful entrepreneurs had to overcome. A greater appreciation of these problems on the part of the historian and a more extensive study of individual business firms, she felt, would help to mitigate the false and unwarranted popular notions of business practices and businessmen.

These sentiments of Dr. Larson were supported subsequently by Professor Arthur H. Cole, another distinguished member of the Harvard Business School, in a review-article which he called "Business and the Stream of Social Thought."[6] This was an amiable discussion in which the histories of Vernon L. Parrington, Ralph H. Gabriel, and Merle Curti were taken up along with a good many other volumes of interest to businessmen. Professor Cole found Parrington's delineation of business-

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The entire question of the relation between the historian and the corporation has been interestingly discussed by Dr. Pargellis, Mr. Ralph Budd (of the Burlington Lines), and Professor Colston E. Warne in "The Corporation and the Historian," *The Tasks of Economic History* (Supplemental issue of *The Journal of Economic History*) December, 1944, pp. 29-46. Although these three men seem to be in common agreement on the desirability of closer co-operation between business firms and the historian, Professor Warne's distaste for "kept historians" and his plea that corporation records be turned over to libraries with no strings attached and be made available "to the Karl Marxes of our day . . . as well as those who wish to give a more favorable tint to corporate enterprise" suggest that he is less bullish about the prospects of the business-scholarship merger than Dr. Pargellis.

[5] *The Age of Enterprise* (New York, 1942).

[6] *Harvard Business Review*, XXIII (1944), 203-210.

men "Wagnerian and grandiose." Gabriel's references to business, he said, carried "an undertone of derision," and even Curti's book, "the best balanced and constructive of the three," reflected the spirit of Parrington and paraphrased him "without apparent dissent." It is characteristic of Professor Cole that he prefers Friedrich Hayek's brand of liberalism to Parrington's and that he shares his colleague's disappointment that "our business civilization" has received such prejudiced treatment at the hands of men who never seek to discover why businessmen "worked and strove."

The argument—varied in all the three articles I have briefly referred to—that the usual accounts of business and businessmen have been biased against the mores of business, would be far more convincing if the objectors themselves did not exhibit an unmistakable bias in the other direction. When we are told that the "New Deal reintroduced social animosities," or that business (in which "Americans have gained their greatest distinction") is "our art, our science, our morals, our practical education, all rolled up into one creative, synthetic effort"—we are justified in suspecting that these professed dispassionate observers have approached their subject with tacit preconceptions. Even Dr. Larson, who is less evangelical than Professor Gras, is convinced that a closer acquaintance with the activities of business enterprise will dispel the vulgar prejudices against it. Nothing in her essay runs counter to Professor Gras's testament of faith, samples of which I now quote[7] as representative of the new and scientific business apologetics:

> They [the scholars] must learn that business is not predatory but social, that it is not the rival of culture but the ally, and that it is not just the result of big forces on the outside but also the result of great efforts in administration on the inside.
>
> . . . generally speaking, the larger the business unit the stronger the tendency toward a higher ethical and social standard because such a standard is necessary in an atmosphere of publicity and criticism. . . .
>
> The businessman seeks profits through serving his fellows. He helps others (as they help him) much more than those who beat the drums of politics, beat their breasts and threaten hell and damnation, and paint lurid pictures of the downtrodden and hopeless incapables. The businessman is

[7]N. S. B. Gras, "Are You Writing a Business History?" *Bulletin of the Business Historical Society*, XVIII (Oct., 1944). The three samples are quoted respectively from pages 77, 77-78, 73.

> intelligently selfish and operates largely in an impersonal and rational manner. Since most men are personal, irrational, and highly sentimental, business is understood by few.

One may regard these statements by Gras and those of his colleagues, then, not only as disinterested criticisms of the offending social historians (i.e., Schlesinger, Gabriel, Curti, Commager, Faulkner and many others in addition to the host of lesser biographers) but as an implicit attack against the economic beliefs which these historians presumably entertain. In emphasizing the predatory and antisocial features of business enterprise, these misinformed investigators are being charged with undermining the popular trust in the integrity and abilities of business leadership and thereby aiding the collectivists and planners who are subverting the spirit of free enterprise and leading us down Mr. Hayek's road to serfdom.

II

Before attempting to answer the arguments and pleas of the Harvard Business School historians and Dr. Pargellis, we must admit the justice of some of their charges. One does not give one's case away by agreeing that too many historians and biographers and social philosophers have tended to see the businessman as a kind of monster and to attribute all of the destructive legacies of business enterprise to the corruption and malice of individuals. Too many writers, as Dr. Larson has said, have oversimplified business problems and responsibilities, magnified its faults, and minimized its accomplishments. Finally (and it would be silly to deny it) too many sensationalist debunkers have been guilty of inaccurate statements. Admitting all of this and more, we are not forced to accept the conclusions of the Harvard Business School historians that the judgments of the social historians on American business are fundamentally wrong. Nor does it follow either that greater familiarity with the techniques and records of American business on the part of detached investigators would change these destructive judgments.

No one would deny that a knowledge of business history is important or that American historians would greatly profit from a closer acquaintance with the histories of individual firms. But business history does not end with the analysis of individual businesses, and Dr. Larson's contention that no judgments on the role of business enterprise in our country

can be really valid until basic studies of individual firms have been undertaken, seems, to say the least, excessive.[8]

To be sure, such a record would be immensely valuable in so far as it might tell us about the special talents of a group whose abilities, it is alleged, have not been generally appreciated, but there is a *social* side as well as a *technical* side to be considered in any judicious and complete treatment of business enterprise. The latter deals with the problems of management, or, as Dr. Larson puts it so well, with *"the inside story of operation . . . the work of planning and controlling and managing the operation of the business unit in producing goods or services with the object of making income greater than cost over a period of time."*[9] It will focus on the character, personality, and abilities of businessmen. The former, or social emphasis, is concerned rather with business history as a cultural phenomenon; it is preoccupied, mainly, with the impact of business enterprise on the community. The first dwells more explicitly on the business genius of a Vanderbilt or a Harriman; the second is more interested in the social consequences of their brilliant feats and the implications of their social philosophy.

Now the intellectual and the social historian (although he might benefit from a wider familiarity with the kind of information Professor Gras feels is indispensable) quite legitimately chooses the second or social aspect of business history, because the abilities and talents of businessmen, as businessmen, have no *necessary* connection with the social historian's chief concern. He may appreciate the skill, audacity, and imagination required to create an industry or to build up a department store, but his

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[8]"Mr. Pargellis' wise remark about the executive's tendency not to put unguarded thoughts on paper suggests the presence of a secretive attitude which may make it exceedingly difficult for historians to trace the record of financial manipulations, labor disputes, political pressures, or antitrust violations that may have occurred. One competent historian with whom I have discussed this issue suggested that he did not think corporate records would be very illuminating in any event. He mentioned problems of destruction, of the inertia, incompetence, and hostility of employee custodians, and added that the written record may prove only a 'shadow of the image' of reality. Frequently, records point in the opposite direction from the fact and serve to cloak underlying distrust and hostility." Warne, "The Corporation and the Historian," p. 45.

[9]*Harvard Business Review,* XXII (1944), 322.

main purpose is to describe and to measure the results of business, in its collective sense, on cultural and social institutions. Cultural historians have come to the conclusion that the qualities necessary to conduct a successful business are not axiomatically valuable to the community—indeed, the opposite has frequently been true—and they have recognized the distinction between business and community objectives. In seeking to evaluate and to understand the social consequences of business enterprise, the historian has naturally enough made use of the testimony of critics unfriendly to business and its ways.

With all respect to Professor Gras and Dr. Larson, this unfavorable criticism is as important for the social historian—more important, I think—than the records of companies that now lie buried and unused in private warehouses. For business history is more than "a study of the service that business has rendered to society." It is as much the story of the disservice business has rendered to society and of the disadvantages it has imposed upon the public. And if the reformers and educators and writers and humanitarians and all the impractical visionaries have dwelt upon the businessman's failures rather than upon his talents, it is because, in their experience, his failures and his blunders have outweighed his social utility.

No reputable social historian, as a matter of fact, has minimized the technical achievements of industrial capitalism or suggested that all businessmen have emulated the practices of the Fisks and Goulds, but an account of our history which omitted the record of business predation, the enormous waste in human and natural resources, depressions and unemployment, monopolies, pressure politics, the growth of social and economic inequalities, and, in general, the failures of the market economy, would not be history at all. Despite the explanations of Dr. Pargellis and Dr. Larson, it is hard to believe that the biases of social historians have resulted from the withholding of available material and from an ignorance of business itself when the record of business enterprise is written plainly all over our landscape and our statute books.

Although some of our historians may have failed to give the businessman his due, they have rightfully concerned themselves with the kind of civilization he has been instrumental in making. This is certainly not an irrelevant question, especially during these days when the defenders of free enterprise are lamenting the drift toward collectivism or democratic planning and are looking backward nostalgically to a freer period

when the entrepreneur operated without government restraints. They have not neglected to underscore America's tremendous industrial development (their books are eloquent with statistics), but their conclusions as a general rule have differed from those of the business apologists in two important respects. They have not attributed all of our material prosperity to the businessman, and they have been less complacent about what has been called "our business civilization."

As scholars, they have not railed against the immorality of business enterprise in the manner of generations of agrarians, utopians, populists, progressives, and Christian Socialists, but in the histories mentioned by Pargellis, Larson, and Cole, it is probably true that there is an implicit and sometimes explicit recognition of the failure of businessmen to coordinate their own interests with those of the many. They do not rest their case on the technical ineptitude of business; they do not deny the businessmen what Brooks Adams called a "genius for money-making under highly complex industrial surroundings," but they frequently suggest that the business classes lacked social insight. As businessmen, many were very brilliant indeed; as citizens, however, they made the mistake of assuming that their own prosperity was automatically beneficial to the community. What Karl Polanyi has written about the nineteenth century liberals can be applied to the American businessmen as a group:

> Fired by an emotional faith in spontaneity, the common-sense attitude toward change was discarded in favor of a mystical readiness to accept the social consequences of economic improvement, whatever they might be. The elementary truths of political science and statecraft were first discredited, then forgotten. It should need no elaboration that a process of undirected change, the pace of which is deemed too fast, should be slowed down, if possible, so as to safeguard the welfare of the community. Such household truths of traditional statesmanship, often merely reflecting the teachings of social philosophy inherited from the ancients, were in the nineteenth century erased from the thoughts of the educated by the corrosive of crude utilitarianism combined with an uncritical reliance on the alleged self-healing virtues of unconscious growth.[10]

Business, it is true, shared this faith in growth for the sake of growth and in the magic of the free market along with the majority of Americans

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[10]*The Great Transformation* (New York, 1944), p. 33.

in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but businessmen were its most energetic disciples. Furthermore, their very absorption in their work, their magnificent single-mindedness and heroic devotion to their own interests, incapacitated them for public service. As Brooks Adams pointed out with particular acuteness, successful class administration "presupposes the power of recognizing a series of relationships between numerous special interests, with all of which no single man can be intimately acquainted." Adams argued that no "highly specialized class can be strong in this intellectual quality because of the isolation incident to specialization."[11] The capitalist managers, he felt, were particularly weak in this generalizing and administrative faculty because of their narrow and specialized training and because of their circumscribed interests. In the process of developing business skills in the "school of hard knocks," they sacrificed their sociality and habitually saw all life in terms of commercial propositions.

These assumptions of Adams are, as I have suggested, contained in the social histories which are so offensive to Dr. Pargellis and to the Harvard Business School historians. But these beliefs could not very well be changed if all the hidden business papers were made available to the historian or if the histories of every business in America were written and digested. This view, moreover, does not conceive of the businessman as Gustavus Myers' ogre; it does not impugn his abilities or his integrity. But it does not play down the businessman's social myopia.

Professor Gras, in outlining the purpose of business history, incidentally reminds businessmen that they should learn the "long and well-recorded lesson, that much good can come from outside business. The points of view of churchmen, workers, consumers, and the public generally," he concludes, "are worth while."[12] This is excellent advice—advice which social historians have long acted on. They have found the basis for their conclusion in Emerson, Thoreau, Melville, Mark Twain, Howells, James, Dreiser, and Dos Passos; they have discovered sanctions for their conclusions on business enterprise in the works of Parker, Rauschenbusch, Herron, Gladden, and Niebuhr; and George, Bellamy, Lloyd, Adams, Veblen, Steffens, LaFollette, and Wallace have helped to

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[11] *The Theory of Social Revolutions* (New York, 1913), p. 208.

[12] "Are You Writing a Business History?", p. 76.

influence their judgments. In addition to these men, hundreds of articles and monographs and autobiographies dealing with the relation of business to art, education, music, and journalism have helped to shape their opinions and led them to express ideas that Dr. Pargellis and Dr. Larson find erroneous if not downright vicious.

That many businessmen are becoming aware of the deficiencies in the old system of free enterprise and the need for a great social responsibility is common knowledge. Its more liberal spokesmen, from Walter Lippmann to Eric Johnston, have been unequivocal in their criticisms of shortsighted and selfish entrepreneurs and corporations who have made a fetish of "Business First." And the *Harvard Business Review* itself has published a number of articles in which the so-called business "realists" are taken over the bumps.[13] It is no longer unusual to hear that businessmen must develop political aptitudes and that they must temper a hitherto "too exclusive respect for exact facts and measurable quantities" with the realization that they are dealing with individuals living in a society.

If business feels maligned and persecuted, the historians are not to blame. In so far as they have been inaccurate, prejudiced, and dishonest, the charges of Professor Gras and his friends have some point, but the influential social historians—the writers of textbooks and historical surveys—have, as Dr. Pargellis admits, been scholarly and exact. Business may expect a more flattering and appreciative account of its achievements by approximating more closely the claims of its well-meaning but often uncritical defenders.

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[13]See for example: B. M. Selekman, "Wanted: Mature Managers," *Harvard Business Review*, XXIV (1946), 236-237.

FARMERS HOME ADMINISTRATION

By T. SWANN HARDING

You do not recognize the name? That's the latest for what used to be the Farm Security Administration; before that it was Resettlement Administration, and before 1935 the germ of the work started in a rural relief program under the Federal Emergency Relief Administration. On August 14, 1946, however, the President signed the Farmers Home Administration Act (Public Law 731, 79th Congress) which gave the agency the permanent status it had never before had, which consolidated in it certain "soft" credit functions of the Farm Credit Administration, and improved its previous program in many respects.

Grounded in what were called loans but what amounted to relief grants, the agency had its real start in Resettlement Administration in 1935. The Farm Security Administration was created to take over in 1937 and it became part of the Department of Agriculture in that year, having previously had independent status. The actual change in name took place September 1 of that year.

Its program combined financial assistance with individual guidance in sound, efficient farming and home management. Ultimately one out of every eight farm operators reported by the Census, lacking other sources of credit, was aided by its rural rehabilitation loans to buy machinery, livestock, feed, seed, and other essentials. These families were dispersed in all but a dozen counties of the United States.

FSA also made farm-purchase loans under terms of the Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenant Act of 1937 to a limited number of tenants, sharecroppers, and farm laborers, to enable them to buy family-type farms of their own. During its first eight fiscal years the Congress appropriated or authorized nearly a quarter of a billion dollars for such loans, repayable over 40 years at 3 per cent interest. The Serviceman's Readjustment Act of 1944 provided that World War II veterans be eligible for FSA purchase

loans just as if they were farm tenants, provided they met other requirements.

FSA was given until November 1, 1946, to transform itself into Farmers Home Administration. Dillard B. Lasseter, capable head of FSA also heads FHA. Associated with him are Paul Lindsey, Jr., former Director of the Emergency Crop and Feed Loan Division of Farm Credit Administration, which now forms part of FHA, and well-liked Robert W. Hudgens, long-time FSA administrative official.

The new legislation provides credit services (at not more than 5 per cent) for farmers who cannot get the loans they need at prevailing rates and terms from other sources. Such credit will be used for three purposes: 1) production and subsistence loans, up to $3,500, for periods up to 5 years at 5 per cent; 2) loans ($50,000,000 earmarked for veterans) to buy, repair, improve, or enlarge farms, amortized over 40 years at 3½ per cent; 3) insured 40-year loans by private lenders to be used for the same purpose as long-term direct loans, up to 90 per cent of reasonable farm value, the lender getting 2½ and the government 1 per cent.

Thus for the first time rural as well as urban people can procure guaranteed mortgages. The FHA also takes over liquidation of rural rehabilitation and settlement loans, and the feed, seed, and harvesting loans formerly administered by Farm Credit Administration. Its precarious year-to-year basis of existence is at end. Hitherto FSA never knew whether it faced extension or extinction; FHA has permanent status.

Work formerly handled on a regional basis will now be shifted to state offices. The new agency has 640,000 borrowers with loans outstanding, plus the 950,000 crop loans derived from Farm Credit Administration, and will have approximately a hundred million dollars for lending during the rest of this fiscal year. Whenever an FHA borrower becomes eligible for private or co-op refinancing of his indebtedness, and can obtain such refinancing at prevailing terms, and at interest not in excess of 5 per cent, he must apply for and accept this credit.

So much for the abstract legal background. What does all this mean in terms of human beings? Our case concerns what were then FSA and will now be FHA clients.

The other night a group of people got together in an Ohio farmhouse. It was a pleasant house with all modern conveniences and well furnished. The group consisted of five farmers, including the one in

residence, and their wives. In manner, appearance, and speech they were indistinguishable from any urban or suburban group. But they had gotten together on serious business, though they went about it with the best humor in the world.

They had gathered to assay their own efficiency as livestock producers. Present to meet them were soil conservation, extension, and farm security personnel of the Department of Agriculture, and a livestock expert from a co-op. The idea was to find whether they rated A, B, or C in making a go of their livestock enterprises—chickens and eggs, hogs, sheep, dairy cattle, and beef cattle. You'd never have guessed it but these people were tenant-purchase loan clients of the Farm Security Administration.

That means that most of them had graduated from rural rehabilitation loans, made to eligible families for the purchase of livestock, equipment, seed, feed, or fertilizer, or for living expenses, medical care, or other farm- or home-operating expenses. Now they had secured a larger loan (ceiling $12,000) to enable them to become owner-operators of family-sized farms. Either type of loan is made contingent upon the client's promise to follow sound farm and home management plans formulated with the aid of the county supervisor, and the other federal and local farm specialists.

The loans are made on collateral that a bank would spurn. In fact FSA-FHA is not a loan agency. Its interest is in human beings and in the conservation of rural human resources. These are essentially character loans. These people could not obtain adequate credit anywhere else, not even from the Farm Credit Administration. But with the loans goes practical guidance in farm and home management designed to remove the deficiencies or obstacles which make for failure or retard farming progress.

Since 1935 supervised rural-rehabilitation loans have aided more than 860,000 families of which 374,000 had paid up in full by 1945. At that time repayments of the principal as a whole amounted to 90 per cent of the amount due. More than 38,000 farm-ownership loans have also been made during the past eight years. By March 31, 1945, the active borrowers had repaid 57 per cent *more* on these loans than was due, to keep them current on the basis of 40 equal annual instalments.

This seems incredible. Many of these people would normally be burdens on the community, some through illness or other misfortunes that were no fault of theirs, others through an incompetence often mis-

taken for shiftlessness. Today they are rehabilitated. They in many instances own and operate their own farms. And the government, which made a precarious investment in their characters and good intentions, finds itself in the position of being repaid faster than it stipulated.

Eminently conservative in its ideology, the FSA was long kicked about and misunderstood.[1] Yet it harked back to the traditional idea of preserving the family-sized farm, right while many progressive people declared it utterly doomed, except for part-time or subsistence purposes, and advocated huge corporate farming concerns, highly mechanized, and working with unionized skilled labor. Today the Administration has fitted into its niche; it is accepted; it is a success. This is largely because a sense of dedication to the public weal animates it from top to bottom.

Though FSA-FHA methods are conservative they are in no sense reactionary. This institution has found out how to bridge the gap between laboratory research and farm practice. Its reliance on science is outstanding. When farm workers come to request a loan it knows the correct questions to ask and the proper advice to give. Consequently it succeeds better than the loan agencies which ask the wrong questions, disregard human character, and do not attempt to have clients formulate sound plans for the use of the money.

Federal personnel does not select borrowers. That function is placed in the hands of county FSA-FHA committees composed of active, progressive, locally resident farmers. At least one of the three members of such a committee must be or have been a tenant-operator of a family-type farm; at least one must be a housewife. The committee members are appointed by the state supervisors, on recommendation by the county supervisor, and by authority of the Secretary of Agriculture. They serve three years and are paid a per diem.

They also serve conscientiously and humanely. Farmers who come to this agency for assistance are assured that their problems will receive

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[1]A notable "enemy" was the Farm Bureau, yet even its leaders always wanted FSA's good functions maintained, while the mass membership never rose to full support of an attack on FSA, and some state bureaus broke with the national office on this matter. Locally relations were frequently swell between FSA and FB membership. The same held true for relations between FSA and Extension Service, which never were as bad anywhere as some maintained they were everywhere, and are today excellent.

sympathetic, common-sense consideration from their more successful fellows on the committee. They are assured also that the local supervisor is their confidant and friend. But the committees decide whether applicants are eligible for FSA services. What is more, they keep in close touch with the individual after he becomes a borrower. They give him neighborly counsel and encouragement under the supervisor's guidance, supplementing him capably and well.

The farm that clients intend to operate is examined and appraised by experts, who analyze it field by field, who know its potentialities thoroughly, and are capable of selecting the enterprises that would do best there. Every farm resource, every item of farm operating or household expense is carefully considered and recorded. The progress of families which procure loans is reviewed constantly. The family is shown how to assay its own status also.

A farmer rating himself on the form provided will often say, "Well, I guess I'm not much better than a C grade on sheep (or hogs, or poultry, as the case may be) and I've got to do something about that." More often his wife is even more aware of his actual status than he himself, because she usually keeps the farm and home plan record book and can recall figures he cannot, if he ever knew them. When efficiency tapers off something is done about it too.

Maybe the farmer really dislikes sheep. Then probably he better rid himself of them and get animals he likes. Or possibly he simply doesn't have enough fields to produce grain and pasture for the beef cattle or hogs he undertakes to raise. Or maybe his rotations are wrong, or he is trying to carry too many animals. Problems are broken down into their components, analyzed, and remedies proposed. This occurs both at group meetings and in the course of visits the county supervisor makes to his clients. Extension county agents and home demonstration staff work closely with FSA-FHA borrowers and local personnel. FHA also has its own home management specialists in many counties.

In the end the recipients of rural-rehabilitation and tenant-purchase loans turn out to be the most efficient farmers in their counties. There is no reason they should not be. It takes great wisdom and versatility, coupled with sound judgment and no little financial ability to make a good farmer. Only those unusually endowed mentally can succeed by their own efforts. But many can be taught or can learn to succeed, under

practical guidance and with the advice of experts and specialists.

That is just what FSA-FHA borrowers do. Thus they become far better farmers than the average of their communities. They know what they are trying to do and how they should go about doing it. They don't jump off the deep end and merely hope for the best, blaming bad weather for their failures.

In addition to its other tasks, FSA-FHA is devoting a great deal of time now to veterans of World War II. For boobytraps pursue them over here. Farms are mostly overpriced and difficult to secure. As many loans are made with strictly limited funds as it seems wise to make. But veterans are warned insofar as possible against overpriced farms and inflated land values.

Another activity concerns water facilities. The idea is to promote conservation and wise use of water in the West, so that proper land use may follow, and economic resources are developed as they should be. FSA provides needy farmers, either individually or in groups, with loans and technical assistance to enable them to repair or install facilities for farmstead and irrigation water. In some instances they are shown how to divert the water from less to more fertile land and to cultivate that. This program has served some 11,000 families since 1938.

All told about 17,000 water facilities are completed or under construction. A study of 2,000 of these demonstrated that crop sales on farms served by them increased 74 per cent—with a slight decrease in crop acreage; livestock sales increased 56 per cent. Net farm incomes went up from an average of $1,510, before the facilities were complete, to $2,353 afterward. The average borrowings of these families for water facilities were only $589. Again the investment paid out. Loans to water associations of course extend the benefit to many families at once.

The Administration also gives advisory and technical aid to farmers' co-operatives with loans outstanding. Most of these co-ops are successful; many have paid off their loans in full; hopelessly bad ones are liquidated. The Administration continues to aid rural people in getting economical medical service. Through its aid 55,525 families were receiving one or more types of prepaid health service in 1,048 counties in 1945. Dental plans

were serving 11,122 families and hospitalization plans another 25,772. Ninety-two counties had surgical care plans.[2]

The agency inherited its socalled "communism" from its predecessor, the Resettlement Administration. When it was created, in 1937, all resettlement property was turned over to it to complete, manage, and sell to occupants. Two-thirds of the land that once formed the 152 resettlement projects had been sold to private owners by the end of the last fiscal year, June 30, 1945. Nearly half the remaining land was under contract of sale. Most of these projects were set up a number of years ago by resettlement as a way of making good land and adequate housing available to low-income farm families.

The projects were varied and designedly experimental, a laboratory experiment in the great outdoors. The land was usually bought in large tracts, necessary buildings being constructed on each unit, and a few projects, later transferred to the Federal Housing Authority, were set up as small subsistence units for part-time industrial workers. In 1944 Congress directed that these projects be liquidated as quickly as possible.

Today 632,500 acres have been sold and only 308,400 remain. Of the latter, 125,000 are under contract of sale. Low-income farm families, many of them former GIs, have been the principal purchasers. They have 40 years to pay at 3 per cent interest, on the variable payment plan, meaning they pay more in prosperous and less in poor years, just as do others who secure FSA-FHA loans to purchase their own farms.

Veterans of all foreign wars will have preference for FHA's long-term loans and insured mortgages. Disabled veterans will be eligible, provided their farm income plus pension is sufficient to pay expenses and retire the debt.

If it is regarded merely as a social and economic experiment, this agency has proved of enormous value, and unfortunately, experimenta-

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[2]The Administration's farm labor activities, including its 95 farm-labor supply centers and its wartime programs for transporting domestic and foreign workers to labor-shortage areas, were transferred to what is now the Labor Branch of Production and Marketing Administration, July 1, 1943. A few of the old FSA camps had a mixed white and Negro population, FSA's policy being to ignore race differences whenever possible. This gave many people a little better break than they would otherwise have had, and the mixed policy succeeded admirably in a few cases.

tion in the social science field is rare enough. First FSA has shown that rural poverty is not just a depression phenomenon or something that occasionally occurs because of drought, but has been growing over a long period and is rooted in a multiplicity of causes. Moreover many families have not merely been "rehabilitated"; they have been placed on higher living standards than they ever enjoyed before, but no higher than is their right as American citizens.

The problems of families seeking rehabilitation are complex and a full kit of different social and economic tools must be ready to aid them. True rehabilitation means attainment of a cluster of interrelated social and economic goals, not just paying off the loan, or canning so many quarts of home-produced food, or acquiring more working capital, or participating in community affairs. All families do not start from the same point; each has individual problems of its own; techniques must be flexible and tools varied to deal with them.

Loans-plus-supervision, with associated techniques, constitute a socio-economic invention of the very first order which can become a powerful instrument of rural change for promoting the welfare of low-income rural people. Finally, the loan must be large enough but not too large, and supervision must be much more alert and sustained for families of lower economic status with complex problems. All families procuring loans must be made to understand the program and brought to participate voluntarily, if the Administration is to follow true democratic procedure throughout.[3]

There you have the Farmers Home Administration of today. It makes what most banks would regard as financially insecure credit ventures pay rich dividends in human rehabilitation. On top of that it gets most of its money back besides. Can you suggest any sounder humanitarian methods than those the Farm Security Administration so long used? Its acceptance as a permanent part of the federal government, now fully achieved, will lead to far greater usefulness. The new Farmers Home Administration made its official debut November 1.

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[3]In this connection see "Lessons from Rural Rehabilitation Experience," by Olaf F. Larson, in Fall, 1946, *Land Policy Review*, available from Economic Information, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D.C.

NOT PARITY BUT BALANCE

By LAUREN K. SOTH

IN A SENSE, merchants in ideas of agricultural policy have come full circle. When farmers were in financial difficulties after World War I agricultural leaders decided the government should do something to make the competitive price system work better. Under Henry C. Wallace, father of the recent Secretary of Commerce, the Department of Agriculture began preparation of economic outlook reports to guide farmers in their production plans. When the supply of some product was large, the department would recommend that farmers reduce that line and expand another. Now, after thirteen years of more direct efforts to control farm production and prices, leading farm economists and planners are turning back to the old idea of making the free-price system work better.

The new scheme calls for government outlook planning, but this time backed up by guaranteed prices. Dr. Theodore W. Schultz, of the University of Chicago, has called it "forward pricing." Schultz was first among agricultural economists to propose this government pricing system flexible enough to adjust supply and demand but rigid enough to take some of the risk out of farming operations.

Many economists and several farm leaders have taken up with the idea. Secretary of Agriculture Clinton P. Anderson has expressed himself in sympathy with it. In a contest on postwar agricultural price-policy conducted by the American Farm Economics Association last year, three-fourths of the winning papers presented plans for forward price guarantees.

A survey of current writing on agricultural economics reveals a high degree of unanimity on what changes are needed in farm programs. The lessons of the last thirteen years of national farm programs have been so pointed, so clear that nearly every expert comes up with the same interpretation. This unanimity reminds one of the agreement which existed among agricultural leaders at the start of the New Deal in 1933 and suggests that it may bring results. In the early '30's most farm leaders favored some kind of farm production control by the government. The

"domestic allotment plan" for adjusting crop acreage was pushed by Henry Wallace and many others. This plan became the basis for the original AAA.

Experience in recent government farm programs seems to have solidified expert opinion on three main points: (1) Production control as a means of controlling farm prices hasn't done the job intended. (2) The "parity" price goal based on 1909-14 relationships is not workable. (3) Farm prices must be flexible enough to allow "clearing the market."

Agreement among the experts has little to do with what may come out of Congress when it gets around to revising farm programs again. However, it seems reasonable to expect that crop acreage control for the purpose of attaining parity prices may be discarded or at least modified. Perhaps the yardstick for acreage adjustments may become solely better soil use. Programs may also be changed to provide a more flexible farm price system. Income support for farmers in depression periods may be achieved by some other means than supporting market prices.

The possibility of congressional action along these lines does not seem so remote when you consider the different groups who have advocated such changes. I have already mentioned the contest of the Farm Economics Association. In addition, a committee of that Association on parity concepts came out with similar proposals. It is also noteworthy that the Committee on Postwar Agricultural Policy of the Association of Land Grant Colleges and Universities recommended freer agricultural prices and only limited production control. Many of the speakers at the National Farm Institute in Des Moines last February favored relaxing farm production controls, freeing farm prices and achieving fair incomes for farmers by other means. Among nonagricultural groups, the Research Committee of the Committee for Economic Development has also gone on record in favor of full farm production and farm income support in other ways than pegging prices above market levels. The National Farmers Union backs a change away from the production-control, parity-price brand of farm program.

Of all farm organizations, only the American Farm Bureau Federation under the guidance of Edward A. O'Neal remains to carry the torch for parity. But O'Neal, a southern cotton grower himself, with his powerful organization of commercial farmers backed by the South's conserva-

tive Democrats in Congress, is no mean torchbearer. O'Neal takes the position that 1909-14 parity may not be perfect but it's something he's got, and he's not giving it up until he's darn sure he can get something better.

Nearly all national legislation dealing with farmers' prices and incomes is based on the principle of giving farmers the same purchasing power they had in the pre-World War I years of August, 1909 to July, 1914. This is the so-called parity base period. The parity price for a product is that price which will give a unit of the product the same buying power for things farmers buy that it had in those years. The Agriculture Department index number of prices farmers pay (including interest and taxes), stood at 212 (1909-14=100) in November, 1946. In other words prices farmers pay were 112 per cent higher than in the base period. In 1909-14 wheat prices averaged 88 cents per bushel. To have the same purchasing power as in 1909-14, therefore, wheat has to sell for 112 per cent more than in the base period or around $1.87 per bushel.

Parity has a long history. Shortly after World War I when farm prices crashed, land values plummeted from their wartime peaks and farm mortgage foreclosures increased, farm leaders began demanding "parity" for agriculture. The five prewar years had been years of fairly stable farm prices—years when farm incomes were favorable in comparison with city incomes. In the early 1920's farmers could look back just a few years to the comparatively rosy conditions before the war and logically demand a return to those conditions. Agricultural economists came to the conclusion that if farm prices were raised to their prewar relation to prices of things farmers buy, everything would be all right in agriculture.

The philosophy behind the parity-price program was based to a large extent on the price policy of industrial corporations. Agricultural economists noted that, whereas farm prices fluctuated up and down sharply in response to changes in supply and demand, prices of things like steel rails and automobiles held a fairly even keel. Industrial managers manipulated production up and down according to changes in demand. Why couldn't this be done for agriculture? the economists asked.

The basis for the original AAA act was this idea of regulating production and holding prices steady at parity levels—monopoly economics. The leaders of the American Farm Bureau Federation took up with this

conception of farm relief in a hurry. They made parity a potent rallying call, not only for supporting farm programs but for building their own membership.

In order to give agriculture parity prices, Congress gave the Secretary of Agriculture power to enlist farmers in crop-acreage adjustment programs. The secretary pays farmers for complying with the department's crop-acreage allotments. As a last resort, in case a surplus piles up, the secretary can institute marketing quotas to regularize the flow of a product to the market. But in order to do that, he must have a vote of approval from two-thirds of the farmers growing that particular crop.

Crop-acreage control has proved to be an unsatisfactory tool for adjusting farm production. Within the limits under which the control program has operated, reductions in acreages have been largely offset by higher yields on the acres still in production. Farmers naturally took only their poorest acres out of wheat production, for example. They were paid for using fertilizer and for better crop-rotation practices. This raised productivity on the fewer acres still in wheat. Consequently, total wheat production did not show the decline expected.

Control of corn acreage was intended to regulate production of livestock. Corn is by all odds the most important grain for livestock feed. Fairly sharp reductions in corn acreages during the 1930's had little effect on livestock production, not only because of the same sort of offsetting adjustments as in the case of wheat, but also because other feed crops like alfalfa and clover were grown on land taken out of corn. Often when farmers fed more legume hay in livestock rations they improved the animals' diets and increased rather than decreased output.

In cotton, however, AAA acreage control has had considerable long-run effect on production. Acreage cuts were more drastic than for grain. And the replacement crops were not fiber crops competing with cotton, so the reduction was not nullified as in the case of corn.

With a few exceptions, such as cotton, we can say that production control in agriculture failed largely because controllers could manipulate only one factor affecting output—acreage. Over a long period (when weather changes average out) cutting acreage cuts production. But the conception of flexing production up and down each year in response to demand—as in the steel industry—proved unworkable.

Today's planners are not rejecting acreage controls, for nearly everyone agrees they have been successful in improving soil-conservation practices. However, they do reject acreage controls *as a means of obtaining price objectives.*

The faults of the parity-price approach are particularly clear in the case of cotton, the very crop on which production control worked best. Through the AAA program the total acreage in cotton has been virtually cut in half. Better farm practices and keeping cotton on the more fertile land have brought a sharp rise in average yields of cotton since 1930. The net effect of these two shifts has been some decrease in the total production of cotton.

Nevertheless, the government policy of maintaining cotton prices at or near parity levels has prevented even this reduced supply of cotton from moving into domestic consumption and export channels. Our carryover of cotton prior to harvesting the 1945 crop amounted to more than 12,000,000 bales, slightly greater than an average cotton crop.[1] Consider this in light of the fact that demand for cotton has been the *strongest in history* during the war years. Yet cotton has been priced so high that rayon, jute and other fibers have been replacing cotton in the domestic market.

While cotton prices have been going up via the parity formula, rayon prices have been dropping as production steadily increases. In 1935 no automobile tires were made with rayon cord. In 1938 about 2 per cent of our tires contained rayon cord, and by 1943 about 15 per cent of the tires were made with rayon.

While American cotton production has been going down and prices up, foreign cotton-producing countries have been increasing output and grabbing off the world market in cotton.

Virtually the same story could be told for wheat before the war. Since the outbreak of war demand for all foods has been so great that the government has been able to liquidate its top-heavy surplus of wheat in two ways: (1) By feeding it to livestock, and (2) by shipping wheat

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[1]The carryover was reduced to 7½ million bales in 1946 by record peacetime domestic consumption. The 1945 and 1946 crops were extremely small, so a further reduction in stocks will occur in 1947. But a return of average yields will again pile up our supplies of cotton.

and flour to foreign countries for relief purposes. But once the extra and abnormal demands caused by the war have ended, wheat will be in the same boat as cotton.

Now let's contrast the outmoded parity, production-control system to the forward-price plan.

The forward-price plan would not attempt to peg farm prices at any certain level. In the long run, prices would not average any higher than under a free, competitive market. But the plan would take some of the risk out of farming. The government would announce ahead of planting time the minimum price a farmer could count on at marketing time. This forward price would be a forecast made by government experts. If the experts' forecast turned out to be too high, the government would make good on their forecast by direct payments to farmers of the difference.

The forward-price plan would not only reduce the risk in farming but it would also tend to achieve a better balance between supply and demand. If a huge supply of some product were on hand, the government's guaranteed price for the next season would be low. This low price might induce a great many marginal producers to grow something else. At any rate the large supply would move into consumption—either in this country or abroad. In this way, surpluses would tend to liquidate themselves. We would not have the spectacle of ever-mounting surpluses, with prices artificially pegged at such high levels that all producers grow as much as they can within their allotments.

Guaranteed forward prices, announced before planting or breeding time so as to influence production, are nothing new. They were used in World War I to encourage increased production of wheat and hogs. They also were used extensively in World War II to expand production of livestock and livestock products.

And they worked! Even before we got in World War II, in April, 1941, the then Secretary of Agriculture Claude Wickard, announced a guaranteed minimum price of hogs at $9 per hundred pounds for the coming year. Hog producers responded quickly. They raised 16 per cent more hogs in the last half of 1941 than in the corresponding period of 1940. Later farmers were given minimum guarantees on many other products. Thus the government was able to reflect changes in demand well ahead of the normal market.

For most perishable products this is particularly important. Current prices are based on current demand and supply conditions and never fully reflect future changes.

Suppose, for example, that business conditions indicate a sharp increase in consumer demand for pork a year hence. Few farmers are in a position to forecast such a change. They are not likely to increase breeding of sows until prices have actually gone up. Many studies have shown that they base production and marketing plans largely on current prices even when informed of probable future trends. That's why the original outlook program, begun by the elder Wallace, accomplished little. But if the government *guaranteed* farmers higher prices in the coming year, they would confidently increase production.

Of course the forward price system would eliminate many of the opportunities for smart individuals to get ahead of the crowd and profit from high prices. But it would result in a better balance between production and demand. It would reduce the advantage of a very small minority in order to benefit the great majority.

In the early 1930's the 1909-14 parity goal was not unreasonable. It was only about fifteen years old and was the most recent stable period in agriculture that could have been selected.

It is now clear to impartial observers, however, that 1909-14 parity is no longer worth saving. In the cases of cotton and wheat, as has been pointed out, parity prices are far too high. Parity prices of dairy products and livestock are too low. During the war we had to guarantee farmers returns well above parity levels in order to get needed dairy products and meat.

The plain fact is that 1909-14 parity is more than thirty years out of date. Those three decades have brought many changes in consumers' choices and needs. They brought a big growth in apartment-style, can-opener living in the large cities. Consumers now want less energy-producing food, because they live more sedentary lives. One feature of the change in demand is the desire for smaller cuts of meat and smaller dressed chickens than were popular before World War I.

Changes in consumer demand have been small, however, compared with the changes in farm production methods and costs. In 1909-14 tractors were rare on Corn Belt farms. The horse was still the major source of farm power and a major outlet for the oats crop. Horse numbers have

declined ever since. With the increase in tractors have come cornpickers, combined harvester-threshers and many other labor-saving machines. The development of hybrid corn and other new seeds have had an equally profound effect on farm production.

The parity policy ties agriculture to the horse and buggy days. A forward-looking policy would make possible—rather encourage—changes in farm prices to reflect changes in consumer demand and production costs.

Under the proposed forward-price program, the government would not meddle with actual market prices of farm products in any way. The forward price guarantee to farmers would not be made good by the government going into the market and bidding up prices to the guaranteed level. In case actual market prices were lower than the guarantee, the government would make up the difference to farmers by direct money payments, allowing market prices to keep their own level.

This does not mean that all attempts to stabilize supplies of nonperishable farm products would be abandoned. The advantage of building up large supplies of grain during big crop years for use during years of crop failures is plain. One of the most successful of New Deal farm programs was the early corn loan on the 1933 crop, which enabled farmers to carry corn over into the drouth year of 1934. Also, the building up of corn and wheat supplies during the '30's enabled us to meet the extra demands of the war.

The yardstick for running an ever-normal granary program, however, should be physical supplies rather than prices. The new line of thinking, as expressed particularly by the winners of the American Farm Economics Association contest points toward balancing physical supplies of grain and cotton. Whenever supplies build up to more than a "safe" limit, loan rates automatically would be reduced and supplies would move out into consumption.

While economists conclude that production control and the rigid parity-price goal in agriculture should be abandoned, they do not feel that farmers should be left to "go it alone" without government aid. The forward-price plan, if it were used simply to attain a better balance between supply and demand, would not protect farmers against the effects of major industrial depressions. The economists believe that farmers are

justified in demanding some income support from the government during depression periods. Here's the philosophy:

The only sensible goal of economic policy for all of us is full production of everything we need. We all want more houses, more radios, more cars, more airplanes, more refrigerators, more pork chops, more milk, more clothing.

In the full production scheme, agriculture has done its job well. Come depression, come war, come AAA, farmers have produced at nearly full capacity. Industry and labor have not. During depression industrial leaders cut down production and throw labor out of employment, keeping prices up. Labor unions are more and more adopting the same restrictive practices. The farmer is in the middle. He tried to use the production-control, high-price technique under AAA. But he couldn't make it work.

So, reason the agricultural economists, when the rest of the economy fails to live up to the full production standard set by agriculture then it has an obligation to make restitution to farmers. Or, in other words, if we cannot work out methods to prevent industrial depressions, we should make direct income-support payments to farmers.

Farmers, unable to control their production, are forced into a socially desirable policy of plentiful, cheap food. Should they be penalized by being made the greatest sufferers from industrial depression? The economists answer, no. Instead, they say, let's pay them out of the federal treasury during depression periods—enough to give them their fair share of the national income. Let's not let them go through the grinding series of mortgage foreclosures which they suffered after the last war. Such payments to farmers would be a particularly effective form of government pump-priming to combat the depression.

Proposals of methods of making farm payments are as many as the proponents. Some economists would use a recent historical base-period, others a moving base-period, others a long-time base-period. A few would even keep 1909-14 parity as a goal for income payments.

Regardless of the precise method for determining payments, however, the experts are nearly unanimous in preferring direct subsidies (horrid word) in depressions rather than production control and market price supports.

Let farmers produce as much as possible, they say. Let consumers get cheap food. But let the whole nation foot the bill—not agriculture alone.

IDEAS FOR A NEW PARTY

—*A SYMPOSIUM*

EDITORIAL NOTE: *This symposium is a result of the call for a discussion of the Provisional Declaration of Principles of the National Educational Committee for a New Party, which was published in our Fall 1946 issue. Some of the comments for this symposium were solicited, others came in voluntarily. We feel that this response testifies to growing recognition of the crisis of American liberalism and the urgent need for a discussion of ideas and policy for a new political alignment.*

FOUR WHO WERE ASKED

I wish I had the time to prepare an article for your *Review*, but I haven't. The question which you open up is one of the most challenging which is confronting our people today.

HENRY A. WALLACE

P. S.: Frankly, I'm hoping to deal with this in the *New Republic* either directly or indirectly in the near future.

I am sorry that I must refuse to contribute 1,000 words to the *Antioch Review's* symposium on "Ideas for a New Party." I have so many jobs to do at the moment that I do not see how I could squeeze this in.

HAROLD L. ICKES

I wish I could do that piece for you. But I fear it's impossible. My schedule during the next few weeks—what with a speaking tour, increased duties on *PM*, my radio and writing commitments—is too jammed to add one thing to it. I am sorry.

MAX LERNER

I am too hard pressed to be able to write the statement for which you ask.

Your Declaration of Principles is very good, but unfortunately I don't see much chance for a new party so long as labor is divided as it is on trade union lines. It is this division which makes the success of a third party at the present time practically impossible.

REINHOLD NIEBUHR

FOR POLITICAL REORIENTATION

By A. PHILIP RANDOLPH

President, Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, AFL

A canvass of American political opinion, as found in various strata of our industrial and social life, would seem to reveal that the American people voted in the last Congressional election more against something, than for something.

There are many reasons for this attitude, one of which was the absence of a program and action from the Democrats to improve the economic and social well-being of the American people, as well as no presentation of a plan to improve the socio-economic conditions by the GOP. It was a vote of political frustration on the part of the American people.

Liberals have provided no guiding star for the peoples' political thinking in the past few years. Following the death of former President Franklin D. Roosevelt, the so-called progressives have been distressingly unwitting of their way in politics, government and economics; having held on to the apron

strings of FDR so long, when finally thrown upon their own feet, they could not stand firmly and their political knees buckled under them, indicating a probable fall to the canvas under the blows of reaction.

Not only have liberals failed to move with political sureness, faith and vision, but the American labor movement, too, hedged in and controlled largely by a psychology of short-ranged, day-to-day program of improvisation and opportunism, was caught in a fog of economic and political contradictions without the Messiah of the New Deal to point the way.

At this hour, a call for ideas to effect a political reorientation, is becoming increasingly audible. The National Educational Committee for a New Party, whose Declaration envisages a program of exploration and education to assess political sentiment for a new mass political movement throughout the country, and also to organize the idea, came into being as a result of the interest of a few labor and liberal individuals.

Through the storm and stress of the coming economic depression, together with a national educational campaign on the basic meaning, possibility and necessity of a new party, the NECNP has hope and faith that organized labor eventually, if not now, will see the wisdom and necessity of taking the long-range view of co-operating with the other liberal forces to build a basic national people's political party. Verily, this party must be a complete break with the old political order as represented by the Democratic and Republican Parties. A third political movement envisaged by the National Educational Committee for a New Party, must be done with trading with the old parties for patronage, advantage, and election expediency. It must be committed to a program of planned economy within the framework of political liberty. Cognizant of the baneful influence of monopoly capitalism, this new party must set its face against the evil of monopoly control of the economic life of America and seek the socialization of the key and crucial property of our national community. Adherence must be maintained to the basic principle of industrial democracy with a view to developing and strengthening the machinery of collective bargaining and fostering co-operative labor-management.

One of its basic tenets should be the achievement of ethnic democracy through the enactment of legislation and the development of educational forces designed to eliminate discrimination based upon color, creed or country, in labor unions, business and industry, education and civil relationships.

On the international front, a new party must support international control and inspection of atomic energy, and should be committed to the abolition of colonialism and world imperialism and the exemplification on the part of the United States of a sound leadership of the moral forces of the world.

This national people's political movement of a third party, must, of course, be non-Communist, without being anti-Soviet Russia or pro-British, although a third party should recognize its kinship with the British Labor Party and support democratic socialism throughout Europe, South America and Asia to prevent the spread of totalitarian fascism on the right and totalitarian communism on the left.

Albeit, this third party must unequivocally fight for disarmament, the outlawing of war and the elimination of the war system, as well as its fundamental economic-root causes, and uncompromisingly oppose peacetime conscription.

* * *

IDEAS FOR DISCUSSION

By Jack Kroll

Director, CIO Political Action Committee

It is good to know that serious people are exploring programmatic ideas for a new political party. I am particularly pleased to see the Provisional Declaration of Principles of the National Educational Committee for a New Party, because they are primarily concerned with the establishment of a program of domestic and foreign policies which might serve as the core for discussion by all liberals, recognizing the difficult years immediately ahead of us. Though I do not subscribe to many planks in your present program, because my experiences with American political exigencies do not apparently correspond with those of the Committee, I feel that the exploration is in the right direction and I hope that the discussion you are stimulating will clarify and modify your original statement.

From the CIO-PAC point of view, all discussion of this nature is to the good. Americans have for too long accepted unquestioningly the bi-party system and, when frustrated by a coalition of reactionary forces in both parties, expressed their sulking resentment in absenting themselves from the polls. This served the reactionaries very well. In fact, that is what the reactionaries always pray for. The problems of the people remain unsettled. The people's needs remain unfulfilled. The reactionary forces feel satisfied. The best example of such a situation might be found in the elections of 1942, and even more strikingly in our recent elections of 1946.

If our experience in PAC since its inception has taught us anything, it has taught us the value of the work of progressives of every shade outside the trade union movement in the direction of arousing our people from their political apathy and their economic ignorance. No effective third party can ever come into existence unless the people, the vast majority of our people, learn first their primary right and primary responsibilities of citizenship. The CIO-PAC feels that without the solid core of this clear knowledge on the part of the people, in general, and organized labor in particular, no progressive movement (let alone a third party) can come into challenging existence. That doesn't mean to say that we are against a third party. But we definitely feel that the time has not yet come for such a party to be born though the circumstances of need may already be here.

Our conviction is that we must first awaken our people to their responsibilities of citizenship and the understanding of issues. Only then can they be led to the point of weighing and questioning the good or evil of either or both parties and to raise the question of the remedy for existing maladies. In fact, we are convinced that if the people gain understanding it will not be necessary to lead them. They will force our leadership to take proper action.

On our part, therefore, we, of the CIO-PAC are determined to follow in the course outlined for ourselves from the start and clarified by Sidney Hillman, namely, to educate the CIO mem-

bers to labor's need to participate in political action at every level. In the next year our emphasis will be for political action at the local level. Our campaign will be concentrated on local, county and city elections. We shall urge our people in the ranks of labor to study the local issues, to enter actively into the political arena, to bring the issues to the people and fight the local political battles on the basis of issues and not personalities.

In that way, we hope we can help our people grow in political awareness and contribute toward a conception of political organization which will be in accord with the American tradition—of the people, by the people, for the people.

* * *

A CALL FOR DEBATE

By Charles M. LaFollette

Ex-Member of Congress from Indiana

I believe that we can create an economy in America which operates in a manner consistent with the American way of life and the principles inherent in the democratic ethic.

The American way is the creation of a society in which all men shall be born into a way of living in which they shall have an equal opportunity to attain "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." This is the purpose of living as announced in our most fundamental American document, the Constitution. It contains provisions for orderly or evolutionary change by way of amendment; but if this method of change is not used, then the right of the people to abolish or alter this form of government is also a part of the American way originally declared in the Declaration of Independence.

It therefore seems to me that it should be the purpose of all progressive citizens to view first the substance of our way of living, that is, our economic system, our culture and our social consciousness and our race relations objectively by applying to them, as a test, the principles declared in the first sentence from the Declaration of Independence . . . that all men are equal in their inalienable rights.

I should like to illustrate by a few specific examples the philosophy which I have stated above. First, in the substantive field—if, in order to enable the people actually to have an equality of opportunity and actually to be permitted the pursuit of happiness, it is necessary to nationalize or socialize certain of our basic industries or that part of our economy devoted to the production and distribution of basic needs—such as coal, ferrous metals, forests, steel, food processings and all forms of transportation—then let us face squarely and debate the necessity or the non-necessity of such action. Furthermore, as we face and debate it, let us also discuss and point out to the people the necessary high standards of personal integrity and trusteeship which must be evidenced by the people and their agents if such a degree of nationalization or socialism can be carried out and at the same time secure to our people the basic liberties and freedom to debate without fear of economic retribution by an all-powerful government (the most significant aspect of the "liberal economic democracy" suggested by the Declaration of the NECNP).

I call attention to the fact that we have in no way prevented the concentration of control and ownership of many of the hasic industries which I have mentioned. To combat them liberals have advocated the development of large unions of workers as the

only group sufficient to protect workers in an economic system where such concentration of capital has been permitted to develop and expand. Such unions, under our present system, are necessary and whatever may be said about the potentiality for creating monopolies which might be injurious to other citizens in such large unions, that potentiality of harm to people as a whole from large unions is infinitely less today than the dangers inherent in the monopoly capitalism which is a part of American economic life.

Nevertheless, we are simply creating conditions of economic combat which are, at best, necessary stopgaps to prevent the engulfment of workers by an uncontrolled concentration of capital. I submit that this is a negative approach and that the American people will not be awakened or rally around a progressive program which offers no other solution.

A so-called progressive or liberal group which will not have the courage to throw these questions open to national debate would not justify the hopes and aspirations of the American people or contribute to the attaining for them of the heritage proclaimed for them in the Declaration of Independence.

Further, on the question of procedure —in the Constitution itself we have permitted the Electoral College to remain as part of the system of a democratic nation, when all people who have given any thought to the application of the democratic ethic or principle to the method of choosing leaders will openly admit that the device of the Electoral College is inconsistent with present-day understanding of the principles of democracy as they operate in the field of government.

The provisions for amendment of the Constitution appear to be surrounded by restrictions which are antidemocratic in their character if we believe that part of the operation of the democratic way of living is the right of a majority to make changes, even in their basic law, as they may from time to time see fit. Again the customs and practices of the Congress — the filibuster in the Senate and the extraordinary power of the Rules Committee in the House — are antidemocratic.

All of these things must be faced squarely and advocated by a liberal group. I point out particularly that the bringing about of change in procedure is not an incidental thing, but it must be brought about if we are to effect substantive change by methods calculated to avoid the necessity of revolution. The two must march together, side by side, as part of any progressive or liberal program.

There cannot be a progressive movement in America without a broad labor base. But a political movement run by labor alone and supported by labor alone cannot be politically powerful enough to effect change by political means. Yet the action of many labor leaders and professional progressives within the last few years has been calculated to drive away potential support among farmers and residents of small towns and unorganized independents.

I am not nearly as much concerned about the operation of known Communists in liberal and labor centers as I am by the fact that methods adopted by labor groups and professional liberal groups have been of the emotional, shrieking, uncompromising character, calculated to create a political struggle in which all organized workers are lined up on one side and all other

people are lined up on the other. The continued pursuit of these methods, I feel, is creating a situation similar to that which existed in Germany at the time of the rise of Hitler, wherein the de-propertied middle classes did not become members of the proletariat according to the Marxist or Leninist theory, but actually were driven to support Hitler as the tool of the industrialists and reactionaries of Germany from their fear of the apparent violence of the methods and procedures used by the German Communists and other left-wing groups.

From my own experience of four years in the National House of Representatives, I say very frankly that 90 per cent of the time when I reached a conclusion and cast a vote in favor of the lesser conservative of two proposals presented to me, I did so because of my own thinking upon the problem and not because of—but more often in spite of—arguments sent to me in support of such a proposal by labor unions or so-called "citizens' action committees" who disdain to explain economics and the necessity for labor to adopt policies it does not necessarily approve in order to combat monopoly capitalism. This disdain of explanation is characteristic of what I call the Lee Pressman-Elmer Benson-Hannah Dorner approach to political and economic problems. One must be driven to the conclusion that intelligent men and women do not adopt these practices because they are politically naive, but that they have adopted them deliberately hoping to create strife, out of which economic stress and consequent bloodshed will arise, rather than create a political soil which is conducive to the production of the fruits and benefits of evolutionary change.

Finally, while again I admit that no progressive political movement can succeed in America without labor's support, I think many people have been increasingly resentful of the tendency of some groups—the Independent Citizens Committee particularly and, in a slightly lesser degree, the Citizens PAC—to refuse to acknowledge the right of people in elective political offices, who have to go out and sell programs to the electorate, to participate in the formation of policy. There is a noticeable disdain by professional or self-appointed liberals of the capacity of anyone not a member of their particular group to have any idea whatsoever worthy of consideration upon the problems confronting America today.

It is not part of the American tradition for workers to accept, as binding upon them, pronouncements directing their political action, without reasons supporting the necessity for the action sufficient to persuade them. Therefore, there can be no effective, progressive political action in America until the present group of self-anointed, self-ordained leaders of the movement, particularly those who are attempting to lead labor politically, realize that they can learn something from other people who have the interest of the American economy as a whole at heart as much as they have.

To these views I wish to add this: It is increasingly clear that if the Democratic Party is unwilling to approach America's problems in the manner I have outlined, then progressives must create a new party as the only vehicle capable of creating a real democratic way of living in America.

* * *

ALIVE AND WORKABLE

By Paul Sifton

Public Relations Consultant
Formerly with National Farmers Union

After twenty-five years of reading painstaking answers to the question: "What must we do to save ourselves from destruction by our own lopsided intelligence?" one approaches each new attempt with a mixture of reluctance and hope—reluctance lest it be another neat but lifeless economic, political and social whodunit; hope that it will have the spark of life needed to draw together and animate the gobs of economic wisdom that litter our political landscape.

That is the way I approached the Ideas for a New Party. So much effort and good will, I thought, for a probable deafening echo of nationwide indifference and silence. A few more chins stuck out and left exposed to be hit.

The happy surprise at finding that the Ideas are alive inclines one to unqualified enthusiasm. These "ideas for a new party" might have a chance of being heeded, accepted and backed by enough Americans to be applied and tried out. If tried, they might work, if not perfectly, at least better than the *laissez-faire,* boom-and-bust, trickle-down theory of prosperity. If tried, they might make politics a nice, not a horrid, word. They might dispel our political apathy.

The careful limitation of the name, The National Educational Committee for a New Party, is a novelty. So is the title of the proposals, "Ideas for a New Party" (much better, in my opinion, than "Declaration of Principles," even though limited by the Committee's name). Here, it is plain, is no Messianic effusion by the Tailors of Tooley Street, to be accepted without change by a majority of the people of the nation.

This is the beginning of political wisdom, to recognize that no program can be formulated for a political party in a democracy except by the party itself, meeting in a convention which is the culmination of local, state, and regional organization based on the real needs and desires in those localities. The most that such a preliminary statement of ideas, or principles, can do is to provide a rallying point, a standard to which like-minded people can repair. Of necessity it is imperfect, incomplete, subject to growth and change. In other words, it must be alive and as fluid and dynamic as the society, the economy, and the government to which it is addressed.

"Ideas for a New Party" meets this test better than most such statements. They are not stated with finality. They are incomplete and imperfect. They explicitly leave the door open for the people to come in to change the ideas and their relationships to each other.

The importance of their publication and further discussion is considerable. Sentiment for a new party is already a fact in several states. It is likely to grow and spread in the near future, as both major parties juggle the problem of how we can buy back the abundance our economy at all times threatens to produce. Already the American Communist Party, which does not have to consult its membership before making decisions, has given high priority to building a new party, not even bothering to explain or reconcile dual participation and membership of the Communist élite in both the Communist Party and the new party. One need not put exclusive reliance on the development of a new party to agree on the

importance of seeing to it that the honest home-grown American sentiment for a new party is not taken over, given the lethal soul-kiss and the trade-mark of the Communist Party.

It is, I think, no accident that the Communists are so quick to try to put their party trade-mark on the new party idea. Nothing could more effectively handicap the success of a new party designed to strengthen and perpetuate democracy than endorsement, manipulation, and direction by a secret, conspiratorial totalitarian group committed to the speediest possible disillusionment of "the broad toiling masses" so that "decadent democracy" may be exchanged for the so-called "temporary dictatorship of the proletariat." Nothing could be more comforting to the reactionaries in both old parties than the knowledge that large numbers of liberals were being taken on another Communist-sponsored hayride. And if, due to recession and/or depression, the numbers in the new party become disquieting, its Communist sponsorship and direction would make easier efforts at economic and political stabilization by totalitarian methods, either of the right or left, but more likely right than left. Again, the two totalitarian ends are being played against the democratic middle way.

By next spring, noncommunists who see the value of a new party may take a look at the economic clock and the political calendar and decide it is time to organize and educate for 1948, 1950 and 1952. That will be very late. But any time this side of the gates of the concentration camps (Fascist, Nazi or Communist) is not too late for men and women who want freedom for themselves and their children.

* * *

SOUND AND REALISTIC

By C. J. McLanahan
Educational Director,
Co-operative League of the U.S.A.

At one and the same time we are citizens, producers, and consumers. As individuals we combine all of these functions in one being. Yet when we express these interests in organized activity we separate them. We organize as citizens into political groups; as producers into unions, marketing co-operatives and professional associations; and as consumers into co-operative and other consumer-oriented organizations. The programs, methods, and short-term objectives of these three major fields of activities differ greatly. Someday there may be a merger as long-range goals become more common, but today they go their separate ways.

My views are based on the belief that more can be accomplished at the present time by keeping this separation than by merging or making inter-organizational alliances. Each must develop its own particular approach and program. There should be an inter-exchange and correlation of activities—much more than there is today—but I do not believe it necessary, in fact, I believe it dangerous for any one of these three groups to identify itself with any one of the others in a way that would prevent freedom of its own development.

Thus, in particular, I do not consider it good judgment for co-operatives as consumer organizations to identify themselves with any political party or platform. This does not mean that they should not enter into political action when consumer interests are concerned, but it does mean freedom to act specifically without prior commitment to act generally.

This does not mean neutrality in a do-nothing sense, but a neutrality which makes it possible to make choices on the basis of specific issues without permanent alliance. That is my view as a consumer and one that I believe co-operatives must maintain, at least for the immediate future.

On the other hand consumers are also citizens. I believe they should act as citizens to build and support the kind of political organization which will do most to serve the needs of the people of the nation. It is my own view that neither of the two major parties of the day can do the job that is required for this high-speed age in which we live. They have not yet shown any great ability to think in terms necessary to meet the needs of twentieth-century living. It is for this reason I believe we must develop a new party program at this time.

Of what should such a program consist? As to the program that has been set forth I believe it is basically sound. The Declaration realistically recognizes the relations and responsibility of government in meeting the needs of the people, but at the same time it recognizes the responsibility of the individual to meet his own needs to the greatest possible degree. It does not go overboard in the belief that there is one way and only one way to solve the problems of the hour. Its economic pronouncements are valid in taking the position that we are most likely to untangle our economic mess and build constructively in the future through a combination of public, co-operative, and private-profit enterprise.

We need now to begin to think through and develop a new political party that does not owe allegiance to the folkways and habits of the past, but one that can freely take the best of the past and join it with present needs to construct a program for the future. Plans of the National Educational Committee are in this direction and whether they succeed immediately or not, they will lay the groundwork for the new party that must and will come in a not distant tomorrow.

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A UNIQUE HOPE

By Horace S. Fries
Professor of Philosophy, University of Wisconsin

The task of social reform is not to institute change but to steer it successfully into humanly satisfying channels.

The great moral paradox of our time is this: that the flux, chaos, and insecurity which characterize it and which promote disillusionment, cynicism, otherworldliness, or hopelessness, nonetheless provide at the same time an opportunity to establish new, more dependable, and progressive guideposts in lieu of the liquidated folkways and "absolutes" of the past. It is not necessary to bring about social change: social changes engulf us. It is no longer necessary to destroy false gods: the scientific-technological world has destroyed all gods. The job now is the pioneer job of building afresh.

But the tools are at hand. They have not as yet been lost in the growing flood of irrationalism—*not* if we set about using the tools at once to build a better human world.

The unique quality of the Provisional Declaration of Principles made by the NECNP is its tentative character. The thinking which went into the formulation of the Principles has accustomed itself to the ultimate fact of change. It has completely withdrawn

its faith from either theistic or dialectical absolutes. But furthermore—and this is what constitutes the unique hope of the NECNP—the faith has not withered but has been transplanted in a richer soil as faith in men and their ability to use and to produce tools—intellectual-technological tools and intellectual-moral tools.

The Principles may sound over-optimistic and naïve to many ears. But to anyone who has learned the lesson that men must build for themselves what they wish to secure, the "pessimistic" flux and chaos of our times present a genuine opportunity to put the tools to work and to improve them. Any constructive melioristic response in the present pessimistic climate sounds optimistic. For construction can hardly be undertaken except in hope. But the naïveté—at least the superficiality—lies on the side of those who object. For they have not as yet learned the lesson that intelligence itself is reconstructive, and that human ends or aims, no less than means and techniques, must be built by men.

When all knowing (scientific, social, and moral) is seen to be instrumental, faith in the magical vanishes. The drive for coercive "power," which characterizes dictatorial social relations, is transformed into the drive for constructive *control* of changes which must lodge *where* the changes occur, not in some distant bureaucratic magician.

No class or group is fated by some cosmic principle to have its aims and interests divinely harmonized with the chaotic course of affairs in time of genuine social flux. There is no fixed pattern of cosmic railroad tracks to be discerned by the "refined" intuitions of an élite clique and along which, by means of mass statistics, propaganda, and secret police, they can switch their streamlined societies. But by proper education of the people in whom and around whom the changes occur, the self-control of these changes can be achieved. And with it will come the dignity and self-respect which accompany genuine creative effort.

If some of the artists and literary people of America can be brought to a response similar to that expressed in the Principles, a people's art movement will be born which will again unify emotion and thought in a concern for the tools and their effective use in co-operative endeavor. The destructive "power" of the coercive might well be destroyed, and the power of genuine control will emerge on a wider scale than ever before in the spotted histories of democracy, and it will emerge in a way which will provide for its progressive widening and effectiveness. Beauty will unite power and freedom in the service of man's life. Men will stand upon their feet, work in the truth, and the truth will speak unto them and make them free.

A PROVOCATIVE DRAFT

By Boris Shishkin
Research Director,
American Federation of Labor

The Declaration is a provocative rough draft of some goals and many ideas. Although it claims to be, it clearly is not a declaration of principles. At almost every step, it falls into confusion of ends with means. At some points it describes only the means, leaving the ends undefined and even unstated.

The authors of such declaration as may finally be written can commit no more fatal error than to write a precise

and detailed step-by-step itinerary for reaching the objectives they state. To do so, moreover, is to shortcircuit the very movement the declaration would launch. Its members should not be deprived of their opportunity to share actively and positively in the framing of specific programs to achieve the goals. Wide democratic participation in the new political task would itself be a powerful force, attracting many from the existing parties where program decisions are shaped by rigid tradition and the will of the few.

Politically and organizationally the first declaration would gain in strength by being no more than a clear and forceful statement of goals. Its wording should be simple, its meaning plain. Most Americans want to have a full part in producing abundance without fail and to have a full share in that abundance. This they have seen at least partly realized in war and under far-reaching controls. They want abundance in freedom and in peace. The declaration should state what economic and political goals must be attained to fulfill this want. It should ask the people to look upon the new party as their committee on ways and means.

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

By Victor G. Reuther
Educational Director, UAW-CIO

Declaration-writing, for the most part, is like talking to oneself, or at best, to a small group of like-minded friends. I do not minimize the importance of maintaining a certain cohesion through the periodic re-statement of aims and policy; I question the urgency of concentration on final goals at this time, when priority must be given to ideas and methods for survival now.

I should say that the primary emphasis of the National Educational Committee should be placed not upon the sins of the enemy but upon the weaknesses and omissions of the allies; not upon condemnation of the monopolistic practices of Big Business but upon investigation of the pattern of social attitudes, national myth and personal complaisance that enables monopoly to parade as free enterprise and the free association of human beings to acquire a doubtful reputation.

I don't believe we can afford the luxury of visions of the good society, where the blessings of technology and the scientific method will fall on the just and unjust alike, so long as we cannot even achieve the beginning of agreement within the labor movement or among non-labor liberals, so long as reaction has the initiative, so long as public affairs and political trends are moved, not by the scientific or social considerations, but by the witches and devils of bigotry, deceit and superstition.

The pressing problem is not how to behave in the promised land, but how to get out of the wilderness. We know roughly where we want to go; we are not completely sure how to get there, or how to persuade others to come along. There is a too-insistent optimism in the Provisional Declaration — it might be called technological wishfulness — which does not seem appropriate under the spell of the atomic headaches, and at a time when the "forces of progress" are on the march only in the imagination of certain zealots who confuse their own activities with historical advance.

We could do with a little more tough-minded skepticism, a skepticism that would regard the American Dream

as a shifting, now-you-see-it-now-you-don't proposition that requires the most active kind of day-to-day adjustment for it to be kept in view. The uncharted waters lie in the gulf between dream and reality; that is the area that must be explored. In the waters where we splash about in our daily activities we must immediately find a way to survive or we will be submerged. Optimism is the stock-in-trade of the standpatters and of the head-in-the-clouds liberals who believe that to write an editorial in a journal of opinion is to crumble the walls of Jericho.

Let's make a practice of asking ourselves embarrassing questions, and giving ourselves daily, weekly and monthly assignments which are forthright answers to the embarrassment. Item: If the rank-and-file workers of the AFL, the CIO and the independent unions do not feel strongly enough about unity to overcome the inertia and vested interests of their leaders, how in the name of the secret ballot can a new people's party win enough alert and aggressive adherents between now and the next depression to throw its weight around in the impending showdown? The answer must be something you and I can do immediately. Item: If the small businessman believes that with a lucky break he can become a big businessman, and if 85 per cent of the American people believe that they are members of the middle class, how long by our present methods will it take to persuade the small businessman, the white-collar worker and unorganized wage-earners to regard union labor as an ally and not as a menace? The answer must tell us how and why we're continually in a circular frustration, and what talents and techniques we must master to emerge. Item: What can be done about the modest task of achieving working co-operation among the nontotalitarian progressives who agree on FEPC, unionism, full employment, TVA's and other domestic matters but who apparently are hopelessly at loggerheads with respect to the conduct of foreign policy? Item: How, specifically, does one go about changing the view of otherwise "available" citizens who believe that perhaps Editor Wallace is right in asserting that it is necessary to make one more stab at liberalizing the Democratic Party?

It may be time to call another conference, a conference with a difference. Instead of summoning a homogeneous group of the faithful, heathen of various persuasions would be welcomed. Readers of *The New Leader* and *The Progressive* would rub shoulders with the loyal public of *PM* and the "new *New Republic*." It might even be desirable to ask a few Willkie Republicans. It might be time to hold such a conference. I don't know. Conferences in the past have been nearly as frequent as programs and they have been cursed with the same futility, and usually enacted by the same stock company of political character actors.

More urgent than the need for declarations or conferences, I believe, is the need for new actors, new business for the actors to perform and a new stage for the new repertory.

Where are the new people? They are our neighbors, our associates, our fellow unionists, the people we talk to and buy from, the people we work with and play with.

The stage? Our streets, our offices, our schools, our shops, our unions.

I do not believe that it is particularly helpful to state, as the Provisional

Declaration does, that "monopoly is the basic cause of the crisis of our age." The crisis which has backed us into our dilemma comes from our failure to inform effectively the many instinctively democratic Americans. It is the tragic preoccupation we have had with wishful programs that has created the gap between the technical and economic realities of our time and the attitudes and assumptions men live by. We shall not bridge that gap by economic analysis which assumes that an economic fact can be the "basic cause" of a political dilemma. The situation of the nontotalitarian Left is too precarious and the plight of democracy too complicated to be helped by piety, even hopeful piety.

Somehow, we must take a much closer look at the collective frustration of liberalism. Once we become undogmatic Jimmy Higgins we most certainly will discover that there are methods for unchaining the political energies in America which in the past have expressed themselves in a democratic tradition, in experimental radicalism, and in a dash and spirit which have not been wholly excised from American life.

But the responsibility is personal.

* * *

BREAK MONOPOLY POWER

By Donald Montgomery

Consumer Counsel, UAW-CIO

Most important of these ideas for a new party is that which calls for elimination of the power of monopoly. This, for my money, is the heart and core of a liberal program and makes the fight worth fighting.

For more than two generations we American liberals have hoped that monopoly power might be made fit to live with by regulatory action or through moral appeasement. Many liberals still act that way. Monopoly meanwhile perfects its control of us. Unless we now make it the central tenet of liberalism that monopoly power must be destroyed, our program will serve no purpose except to betray those who throw in their lot with us. Rather than that we would do better to leave the fight to the communists who, like the industrialists, at least know what they are fighting for. And its name is not freedom.

The Declaration of Principles states forthrightly the case against monopoly control over business enterprise. I wish this might be expanded to assert also the control which monopoly exercises over our political life. Legislatures take orders from the agents of monopoly. Most administrative officials conform to its desires, even when they are not tied to its payroll, past, present, or in prospect. Press and radio daily recite, obediently and in unison, the lesson assigned to them by monopoly.

Monopoly has established a private government which wields police power over large areas of business enterprise. There is no appeal from its rulings, and it is subject to no plebiscite. This private government challenges the power of public government and denies us the right to govern ourselves. This is a dictatorship which has reared itself with our sufferance and perpetuates itself through our indifference. Liberals must make it their number-one objective that the people shall recapture their political liberties and shall use them to elect governments which will not fear to disperse and destroy the sources of this monopoly power.

Communists know that this is the issue which determines America's

future. But they believe that only dictatorship can cope with dictatorship. That is why genuine liberals must suspect their motives and reject their help in the fight against monopoly. We fight monopoly in order to restore our political freedom, not to surrender it. On this issue monopoly and communism understand one another better than either of them understands us.

Now is the time to choose. I do not believe, however, as the Declaration of Principles seems to imply at one point, that we can expect to recapture our political power and to use it for the destruction of monopoly before the coming of the next major depression. There is too much to learn, too much to teach, too many to organize. But it is not too much to hope that we shall have prepared the way by education and organization to launch our all-out battle against monopoly when the depression comes and the people are demanding new leadership with a will to fight for a program that goes all the way.

How to destroy the power of monopoly deserves extensive study. No one device will serve all cases. But there are basic essentials. We must restore to our public government power to meet the challenge of monopoly, including power to operate plants when that is necessary. We must perfect the procedures of democracy so that government becomes the instrument of public policy rather than an oppressor. For the same reason we must experiment in bringing the administration of government closer to the daily lives of people where they live.

Above all, a program for liberals must master the fear which has been nurtured by the private government of monopoly as a means of keeping our public government in the subordinate position which it now occupies. People need not fear a government which they have made *their* government. They may employ or exclude the governmental power as they find necessary. Our program must deal realistically with the measures that are necessary to develop the powers and capacities of a democratic government while keeping it democratic.

These questions are keyed together, as I see them. We shall not overcome monopoly unless we recapture our political power. We shall not retain our political liberties unless we destroy and totally eliminate the power of monopoly.

THERE IS A THIRD WAY

By Will Herberg
Educational Director, Dressmakers Union, Local 22, International Ladies Garment Workers, AFL

The declaration on "Ideas for a New Party" strikes me as the best programmatic embodiment of the lessons and ideas that three decades of agony and disillusionment have taught us. I think it can be truly said that it is the only programmatic statement of its kind, certainly the only one put forth in this country, that takes serious account of the shattering experiences of two world wars, of the Russian Revolution and its outcome, of the mad career of fascism, of the inner collapse of traditional socialism.

Among the lessons particularly relevant to a reconstruction of socialist thought, taking that term in its broadest sense, I would include the following propositions:

1. All economic, social and political reform, no matter how radical, is essentially instrumental and acquires

meaning only in terms of the ultimate object which it is to serve. That object is the free self-development of the individual person in free association with his fellows: a goal obviously of the spiritual order. "Change from without," in other words, possesses significance only to the degree that it removes impediments or creates possibilities for "change from within."

But if institutional reform is ultimately merely instrumental, it is for the great mass of men indispensably so. Mean, degrading, oppressive social conditions constitute obstacles to the good life that few indeed can ever fully transcend. Material circumstances do not, certainly, determine the spiritual life, but they only too often limit and thwart, even pervert, its free development. Both aspects must be kept in mind, it seems to me, if one is to avoid the twin errors of contemporary social thinking — sociological fetishism and quietistic absentionism; one the characteristic heresy of the Yogi, the other of the Commissar.

2. Collectivism and planning are not ends in themselves, as much of traditional socialist thought has made them out to be; they are institutional devices to control the economic forces of the modern world *in the interests of freedom and justice* and are to be justified only to the degree that they serve this end. As institutional devices they are dangerously ambivalent in the potentialities. Recent history has taught us what we ought never to forget that thoroughgoing collectivism, operating through centralized state planning, is the economic pattern of totalitarianism. Collectivism is really a last resort; only where and to the degree that individual effort and voluntary association will not work, can it claim a place in any program of liberal-democratic reorganization of the economic order. The radical ambiguity of collectivism and social planning is another of the crucial lessons that experience — the experience of three decades — has taught us.

The lesson goes deeper. We have learned not merely to appreciate the limits of centralized state organization in economic life; we have learned to appreciate the fundamental significance of the constitutional limitation of governmental power in general. The liberal-democratic limited-power state is not, as the historical school, including Marxism, has led us to believe, a fugitive political form relative to a particular and transitory phase of socio-economic evolution; it is an enduring principle of political organization relevant to any social order that strives to preserve freedom amidst the compulsions of collective life. The concept of the limited-power state involves a recognition of the fact that the state is not synonymous with society but merely one of its institutions, that there are concerns of human life which transcend the state and, at another level, transcend even society itself. The idea of the omnicompetent state is replaced by a kind of social triangle of state-society-individual, the dynamic tension and balance of these three forces yielding whatever reconciliation of freedom and order is possible in social life.

3. Utopia cannot be achieved in history. The stabilization of any system, no matter how just and free, as final and perfect inevitably means the stabilization of the residual unfreedom and injustices within it. Every final stabilization is thus a premature stabilization

because the ideal cannot ever be fully realized in any existing situation.

Yet ultimate ideals, dangerously delusive if considered as at any time fully enacted in reality, have an indispensable role to play in the dialectic of social movements. Out of the tension between ideals that are never fully attainable and the reality to which they are yet always relevant is generated the dynamic of social action.

As an expression of these lessons and ideas the Declaration is, in my opinion, a most effective statement of the libertarian-socialist position in terms of American reality and with genuine relevance to the urgent problems of American economic and social life. It is a convincing affirmation that over and beyond the two false extremes of unregulated private capitalism and totalitarian state control there is a third way, a way in which the economic forces of modern industrial society may be brought under control not only without imperilling our liberties but actually so as to enhance and enlarge the opportunities of freedom for all.

What I particularly like about this programmatic statement is its emphasis on pluralism and its jealous concern for personal liberty. It refuses to seek salvation in the ruthless application of one all-healing formula without regard to facts or consequences. It thoroughly understands that a balanced variety of institutional forms and approaches is not only more true to the realities of the situation and therefore economically more effective but is also, and above all, conducive to greater degrees of freedom in social functioning.

The same concern for freedom is evident in the unambiguous defense of labor's ultimate right to strike both against the economists who insist that such "anarchy" would upset their tidy little plans and against the totalitarian-minded "liberals" who urge the thorough-going nationalization — i.e., *étatisation* — of industry and the conversion of the workers into governmental employees with restricted rights. "Replacement of private capitalist monopoly with state monopoly is a revival of absolutism"— these are words that cannot too often be repeated these days, particularly to socialists and liberals.

AN AMERICAN RADICALISM

By Edward Fiess
Instructor in English, Oberlin College

The first objection commonly put forth to starting a new party is the familiar one that this country is set up on a two-party basis and that a new party would be as cosmically indecent as a new sex. When it is pointed out to the objector that American political history does not support this view (if it did we would still have Tories and Whigs) or that the new party may wish to replace one or both of the old ones, he explains that times have changed and that we should not try to start a new party *now*.

I have neither the space nor the inclination to rebut these objections, for the final argument is psychological: We can if we will. But I point out that the broad basis which the NECNP Declaration sketches is our surest guarantee against a formation of tiny "splinter" groups. In aiming at an organization to which both farmers and workers, both professional and nonprofessional people, both small businessmen and small employers may belong, the Declaration is trying for a party in which these sometimes conflicting groups may settle their minor

differences for the sake of their larger identities of interest.

I like to think that the Declaration of Principles represents in part the voice of that type that President Conant of Harvard referred to more than three years ago in his provocative *Atlantic Monthly* article entitled "Wanted: American Radicals." His radical was an as yet imaginary character who drew inspiration from Jefferson rather than Karl Marx and from the events of Jackson's time and place rather than from those of Engels'. This radical was opposed to all vast concentrations of money and power, opposed to them on principles that antedated the Communist Manifesto; he was uncompromisingly in favor of civil liberties in a way that Marxists never were, or are. Fully conscious of the importance of bread and butter, he did not forget ideas, spiritual values, or the dignity of the individual man.

The kind of American radical that we have had, typified by the Communist Party and the Trotskyite groups, was and is a horse of another color altogether. In fact, the Communist Party has demonstrated with consistent inconsistency that it and its fellow-travelers could cease to be American and cease to be radical on one day with as much ease as they wrapped themselves in the flag on another.

Without wrapping ourselves in the flag and without disregarding the larger issues of international politics, we can, as the Declaration shows, draw our strength from American sources. This country is now in an era of shifting political power relations, and if the majority of people can find political instruments to express their will, we may see a period of change as great as in Andrew Jackson's time.

* * *

PROGRAM FOR OUR TIMES

By Norman Thomas
Chairman, Socialist Party

From the time I first read the Provisional Declaration of Principles I have considered it admirable as a common denominator of the convictions of worth-while progressives and as a program for today. It has learned much from past experience which is of use in facing the crisis of our times.

The Declaration is a sort of document that almost everybody would phrase or arrange somewhat differently. I, for instance, would have put more into the foreground my certainty that at this date of history there can be no successful program of action which does not start with the necessity of accepting as a dominant ideal devotion to the common good, which cannot be served without some sort of democratically controlled planning. But this criticism does not seriously affect my liking for the statement.

The majority in the recent election once more voted against things they did not like rather than for any constructive policy and program. There is widely diffused sympathy for what I should call democratic socialism, which has little effect on the political allegiance of voters. What energy they have is devoted to finding the lesser evil. Constructive action is paralyzed by certain convictions or myths which are worth listing:

1. The myth of free enterprise. In this almost every American leader in politics and economics, from Henry Wallace to Wall Street monopolists, from John L. Lewis, Philip Murray and William Green to the NAM, from farmers to the editors of the *New York Times,* professes to believe. Then all of them on occasion call loudly for help

from the government for their own cause or their own group. Insofar as the myth is a reaction against the totalitarian state, it has value, but it departs so far from describing things as they are or ought to be as to promote a confusion to which totalitarianism of the right or the left — and there isn't much difference — will probably be the answer.

2. The conviction that what is wrong with our system can pretty well be rectified by direct action of your own group to improve its own relative standing. The coal strike is the outstanding illustration as I write. A while ago it was, on the one hand the consumers' support of black markets, and on the other the virtual strike of cattlemen, farmers and packers against the OPA prices.

3. The conviction that, like it or not, we have to get along with the present two-party system. This basic conviction encouraged the PAC to emulate the old Anti-Saloon League tactics of manipulating the old parties. The record of candidates endorsed by PAC in the last Congress and its bad showing in the November elections have discredited the PAC program without as yet turning its supporters to the business of building a new party.

4. The conviction that in foreign affairs Franklin Roosevelt left us a program fit for peace. The practical expression of this conviction is that American proposals and action should be kept in a framework of continual appeasement of Stalin, a plan which is only less likely than preventive war itself to breed disaster. Here I heartily endorse the constructive program of the Declaration. It was a genuine tragedy that we Americans went through the war on the negative assumption that peace would almost automatically follow unconditional surrender, that at most what would be necessary would be a continuing alliance of the strong. Justice and mercy were lost in the shuffle. The fact that power brooks no rivals was forgotten. Negatively the American policy could have been far worse, far more overtly imperialist. Positively a constructive American program (for which Roosevelt substituted his personal influence on Churchill and Stalin) is only now inadequately emerging. To that unsatisfactory bipartisan program this Declaration offers an alternative far more realistic and less dangerous than anything offered by Henry Wallace and his "progressive" supporters.

The rational corrective to the inhibiting convictions which I have listed is given in this Declaration of Principles. The question is, what more is necessary to hasten the kind of political organization and action for which it is already dangerously late.

A PLAN FOR FREEDOM

By Granville Hicks

Novelist and Critic

The Declaration of the National Educational Committee is notable because it contains relatively few left-wing clichés and because so much of it is fresh and imaginative.

It will probably be called utopian, and it would be worth very little if it didn't in some measure deserve the charge, for the only new party worth building is one that stands for what we really want. The existing radical parties, almost as obviously as the two major parties, are incapable of the originality and the boldness that the human predicament demands. The Declaration is not, and could not pos-

sibly be, a perfectly adequate response to the political, intellectual, and moral crisis of our times, but it grows out of the kind of thinking that is necessary if our problems are to be solved.

I am particularly interested in the sections that speak of the farmer and the small businessman. The Communists and certain other leftists periodically bemoan the decline of farm ownership and the sad fate of independent businesses, but these leftists believe that the concentration of ownership is inevitable and is a necessary prerequisite for the establishment of socialism, and one has to be skeptical both of their professions of grief and their programs for the restoration of free enterprise. I do not believe that the recommendations of the National Educational Committee have this savor of hypocrisy, and certainly I hope not. Great numbers of people—people without whom a new party has little chance of success—deeply want independence, and I think they ought to have it. It is only sensible, moreover, to protect and extend one of the significant forms of human freedom.

A large section of the right insists that planning and private enterprise are absolutely incompatible, and a considerable section of the left agrees. I believe, on the contrary, that at our present stage of economic development only planning can save private enterprise. I think that there can be a plan for private enterprise, and there must be. Many people hold that the only answer to the bigness of the monopolies is a bigger, an all-embracing monopoly, the state. It is true that only the power of the state can match the power of the monopolies, but it does not follow that the state must use its power to bring the process of standardization and co-ordination to a climax. The state's power can be so employed as to make diversity and independence possible.

In the same way I believe that there can and must be a plan for decentralization. Even if big units are necessarily more efficient than small, which I doubt, our resources are so great that we can afford to put the welfare of the people ahead of efficiency. Complete decentralization, of course, is impossible in an industrial society, but there can be a much greater degree of decentralization than the people who are in love with bigness are willing to admit. The more complete centralization becomes, the more acute the danger of totalitarianism grows, but if significant decisions are left to the smaller and more comprehensible units of society, there is a chance for democracy to grow.

If I comment on these particular points, it is not because I regard the remainder of the Declaration as unimportant. I do take satisfaction, however, in what it says on these issues, for here is evidence that it is not thinking in conventional leftist terms. There are too many self-styled liberals who, whatever their protestations, are working toward the police state. I have become suspicious of all talk about freedom that does not show concretely how freedom is to be maintained. The Declaration offers a plan for freedom, an imperfect plan, no doubt, but one to start with and to improve upon.

I have only one general criticism of the Declaration, and that is that its tone is too optimistic. I shall be told that we shall never get started if we worry too much about the difficulties of the journey. That may be true, but if we start off without understanding

and preparing for the obstacles ahead of us, we are not going to reach our goal.

A movement for a new party might well begin by recognizing the desperateness of the plight in which our civilization finds itself and by admitting that there are no panaceas. "If way to the better there be," Thomas Hardy said, "it demands a full look at the worse." Our aim must be honest without paralysis and action without self-deceit.

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A NOTE OF CAUTION

By Glenn J. Talbott
President, North Dakota Farmers Union

There is no doubt that the antiquated and calcified political institutions of this country should be completely dissolved and in their place should be two distinct parties — Conservative versus Liberal. The Liberal party should be a new, fresh, and vigorous political party — new in personnel and leadership, fresh in concept and understanding, and vigorously liberal to the fullest extent of its democratic meaning. Such a party would be a ready and an effective instrument to break the inexorable hold by which monopoly Big Business is slowly demolishing the political, social and economic structures which are basic for a living democracy.

But to assume the realization of a new political party is to presume that the people are ready for one — that they have the understanding to forget their sectionalism, their bigotry, their racial, social and political dogmatism of long standing. To bring a mass of people together with unified, purposeful action, they must first be prompted by the desire; second they must have a broad common denominator of interests; and third, they must have the ability to co-operate. All three of these requisites come only with understanding, and understanding can only be predicated upon a long program of education. Until that state arrives any attempt to force the birth of a new party will be wasted effort.

This is not to say that the cause of a liberal living democracy is a hopeless cause, nor that we should cease to strive for a new political instrument to bring about its fulfillment—rather, we ought to face the cold hard facts that mass understanding and mass education is our real objective and our real task before we can think in terms of a stable and effective political alignment or the creation of a new political party.

That the job of education in the fundamentals of social and economic democracy will be a long and tedious one, should not discourage us. Many liberal organizations have recognized this—the CIO and the National Farmers Union, among others, have long been engaged in the task of mass education. Other groups whose very existence is at stake need, also, to assume immediately their share of this responsibility.

Without understanding and education you certainly would not have a "political party" with any stamina or permanency. As with the supporters of the New Deal, you would have action without direction; you would have change without order; and you would have attitude without understanding.

A program of education must be carried on unceasingly at all costs. An emergency may arise soon which would halt this education, and minority groups whose welfare and existence would be imperiled by fascism, may be forced to realign themselves into a

single political majority in order to destroy the forces of reaction.

Political parties, historically, are unwieldly monsters — slow to be conceived, slow to die. The few basic tenets of existing political parties will never become extinct—they will either be assimilated or fostered by another party with a new label.

But "liberalism" as a basic political tenet has never been identified singly with either the Democrats or Republicans. Liberalism as defined by the Principles of the National Educational Committee for a New Party is historically a new attitude because it knows no boundaries, no regions, no classes. Unquestionably it needs a political label and a political vehicle so that it can be more readily recognized —so that it can ride out the confusion and stand alone for what it really is, for everyone to see. But a label now, at this stage of development, might later prove a hindrance.

I have injected this note of caution not out of any wish to dampen the enthusiasm and ardor of those many fine men and women who are working valiantly to realize the dream of a vital, living democracy, but rather to point out the pitfalls that may beset the progress toward a national liberal understanding and thus retard its growth, perhaps irreparably.

* * *

MEETS THE CHALLENGE

By Harry W. Laidler
Executive Director,
League for Industrial Democracy

It is a good omen that there are stirrings in this country in behalf of a new political alignment and that the men and women backing the committee now engaged in mobilizing sentiment for a new party have made a good start on a program to meet the mighty challenges of our atomic age. One cannot read this Declaration of Principles without being impressed with a number of its positive merits. These include:

1. Its firm belief that the goal of American civilization cannot be attained without the full use of all of our productive machinery for the common good; without the abolition of poverty, of unemployment, of unequal economic opportunities and of industrial autocracy.

2. Its concern that a thoroughly democratic international program must be developed side by side with a constructive domestic program.

3. Its realization that the evils from which America is suffering victimizes not only industrial workers, but farmers, professional men and women, and small businessmen; and that all essential workers of hand and brain must cooperate politically and economically for the elimination of these evils.

4. Its insistence that, despite the glib talk about our "free enterprise system," we are today living in an industrial order where competition has, in large areas, given way to monopoly and quasi-monopoly, and that, in field after field, the remedy is not a return to the past but a transfer of industry from private to public and co-operative ownership.

5. Its fundamental concern that economic security should not be bought at the expense of personal freedom, but that all of our civil liberties should be retained and strengthened while advancing toward a more co-operative form of industrial society.

6. Its belief that Americans have done magnificent pioneering work in the past in meeting the problems of

their respective days and generations, and that, if those who have vision show sufficient intelligence and courage, they can organize a democratic political instrument in the coming days adequate to the need of our times.

The provisional Declaration of Principles of the National Educational Committee for a New Party furnishes an admirable basis for political thought and action, and, it is hoped, will receive the earnest consideration of all Americans anxious to play their full part in the difficult days ahead in fulfilling the liberal democratic promise of American life.

GUIDE FOR OUR FUTURE

By Pearl L. Willen

Chairman, Women's Division, Liberal Party of New York State

Much planning and co-ordination will be required for the amalgamation of all groups into a cohesive unit with common objectives and organizational ties for a new political alignment. The Declaration makes a notable contribution to this preliminary process. Its analysis is sound and challenging. It gives us a program which I believe is fundamentally progressive and democratic in its approach to the solution of our domestic and international problems.

The fundamental thesis that economic democracy cannot be achieved except through political democracy and the retention of basic civil liberties will appeal to the American mind and heart. Instead of state ownership of all the means of production, which the Declaration believes would bring on the Leviathan, monolithic, all-powerful state, it proposes limited socialization with economic and organizational pluralism, thus setting up institutional checks and balances on an economic level as did the founding fathers on the political level.

The most fruitful part of the Declaration is the analysis of the future of free enterprise. It does well to remind us that the "right to property" for Thomas Jefferson and Thomas Paine was, to them, a means of promoting individual liberty and security. In our modern economy in which 85 per cent of the American people own no productive property but depend on a wage or salary, we must find substitutes which are not the continued piling up of monopoly capital and the consequent loss of investment opportunities. A fundamentally new approach is needed to stop the drift which antitrust efforts have failed to stop in over a half century of effort. Big business is more powerful than government, but to consider that the answer is big government is actually to condone the trend toward the totalitarian state.

The solution proposed is the creation of public corporations on the TVA model in industries fundamental to the public welfare. Thus would be provided decentralization in responsibility and action, with representation of interested functional groups.

The Declaration provides an excellent beginning for the credo of a new political party. It will doubtless go through some changes in the effort to accommodate it to the wider groups who will want to use it as a unifying faith. If the National Educational Committee for a New Party provides the clearing house for ideas and people that it wishes to do for the next few months or years, the Declaration will be a living document as it meets the test of steady inquiry and criticism.

Although the document is confined to the development of ideas-and-policy, others will share with me the feeling that common objectives will be easier to achieve than common methods. A recent survey by *Fortune* magazine showed that 28.4 per cent of CIO members and 19.4 per cent of AFL members believe that America needs a new party. Yet, in spite of occasional resolutions, there is little organized activity so far. The rank and file seems more willing than the leadership, which is waiting for the other fellow to start.

Of course a principal difficulty is the unhappy conflict within the labor movement itself. No new party can be organized without the trade-union movement as a base. But there are two rival labor movements and each is torn by great political divisions within it. The AFL contains large numbers of Republican as well as Democratic and Independent voters, while the CIO is divided mostly between Democratic, Communist and Independent. The differences, in my opinion, are more irreconcilable in the CIO than in the AFL, because of the doctrinaire position and the cynical political maneuvers of the Communist faction. They are further handicapped by the supposed need for "unity," politically as well as economically, whereas the AFL is traditionally loose in structure and less unified in its objectives. So we find in the CIO that, although the leadership issues plenty of verbal brickbats against Communist infiltration, the Communists continue to retain many of their offices and issue statements on foreign policy.

This cannot go on indefinitely, but until it ends, the publication of manifestoes, no matter how inspiring, will not win the trade-union leadership. Even if this situation were cleared up, it is doubtful that many of the older leaders, trained in the "reward your friends and punish your enemies" school, and grown timid by years of strife (and sometimes years of comfort), will have the courage and the energy to embark on this most enterprising adventure of all. Still, there are many, young and old, who have imagination and conviction and will be ready to join in this good fight when the time is ripe, as I believe it almost is now. While one becomes impatient with their caution, one cannot perhaps blame them because it's going to be a long fight and a hard one when it comes.

It is good to have theoretical scientists whose thinking has moved with the times and who can apply the lessons of history to modern life. This is a splendid document to read and digest and to shoot at as a guide for our future.

* * *

(A number of contributions to this symposium are being held for publication in our next issue; the authors include Sidney Hook, Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., and Patrick E. Gorman, Secretary-Treasurer of the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen of North America, AFL.)

WE NOTE . . .

RETREAT TO WHAT?

The retreat from reason turns into a rout, and the failure of nerve becomes epidemic (at least, at the University of Chicago, endemic). This might be the conclusion if a recent book by Hans J. Morgenthau of Chicago[1] were to be taken seriously, and if the enthusiastic reception it has received in certain circles were to be regarded as symptomatic of more than the collective trauma of some tired and frightened liberals. For, according to Professor Morgenthau, scientific man is through, and power politics is the winner. Rationalism, positivism, liberalism, and all the sorry brood they have spawned are the warped effects of man's attempt to solve social and political problems through intelligent inquiry. We must realize that science can never handle anything but the natural world, that in politics the scientist or social engineer must give way to the statesman or power engineer. And who are these statesmen? Dr. Morgenthau supplies the names—Alexander, Caesar, Brutus, Washington, Lincoln, Napoleon, Lenin, and Hitler. (P. 221.)

It is difficult to know where to begin an analysis of a book as strange as this. For one thing, the author has the unhappy faculty of not telling us what he means by the terms he uses (his confusion of science and scientific method is a case in point), or of telling it inaccurately. When we are told something about Rationalism, for instance, the caricature that is presented is so bizarre that it fails even as a caricature. Professor Morgenthau wants us to believe that reason has really conquered our minds and our allegiances, that trust in science "sets our age apart from preceding periods of history," and that "whatever else may separate the White House from the Kremlin," or John Dewey from Karl Marx, it is belief in reason that pulls them together. To prove this, Dr. Morgenthau recites at length what every schoolboy knows, that the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries constituted an Age of Reason, that Liberalism flourished in the nineteenth, and Woodrow Wilson failed in the twentieth century. True, it is not quite as bald as this, since our author quotes a lot of recent and contemporary writers who are against sin and for Reason.

But what is completely begged is the basic assumption of the entire Morgenthau argument. That assumption is nothing else than this: that modern culture is indeed dominated by the genuine practice of scientific method and by an emotional commitment to that method; that scientific method *has* been applied consistently to politics and that there has been opportunity to judge of its impact. To detect these assumptions is to refute them; yet without them the position of anti-rationalism becomes pathetically meaningless. It would be an amazing optimist who could see the rule of scientific thinking prevailing in men's lives now or at any time in the past—even though a Goddess of Reason was once crowned on the Parisian boulevards. The efforts

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[1] *Scientific Man vs. Power Politics* (University of Chicago Press, 1946).

of philosophic instrumentalists and humanists—"rationalists," to Professor Morgenthau—have always been efforts of persuasion, devoted to convincing man that he *ought* to try thinking. Just the categorical opposite of what Dr. Morgenthau professes to believe, we have failed precisely where scientific and positivistic methods have *not* been tried—in politics, for example. That the bankruptcy of politics and of international relations is to be blamed on the failure of the scientific spirit is fantastic. If ever cart was put before horse this is it. As Ernest Nagel has said, it is like blaming marriage for divorce. It confuses context and agent. The social situation with its vested interests and prejudices and stereotypes has forever resisted the employment of free intelligent inquiry in questions of economics and politics, of religion and ethics. Scientific man has been striving to penetrate that area; to say that he has succeeded in penetrating and then has failed to make good is a monstrous perversion of intellectual history. (A contemporary illustration of this whole point may be found in the large grants Congress is now giving to research in the physical sciences, while practically no congressional recognition is given to the social sciences.) "The triumph of reason!" One wonders if Dr. Morgenthau is not speaking in jest.

Power politics has indeed been dominant. No literate person needs to be convinced of that. What Professor Morgenthau is doing is celebrating that dominance. He may use honorific words like "we have no choice between power and the common good," and "to know with despair that the political act is inevitably evil, and to act nevertheless, is moral courage." However gaudy, this is surrender of the most indefensible sort. Especially when we learn the reason why we cannot choose between power and the common good.

It's this way—man is naturally evil. Or perhaps you've heard that one before. But Professor Morgenthau proves his point by using Latin. Man has in him an *animus dominandi*. That's it. Or, getting back to the vulgar, political corruption "is a permanent element of human existence and therefore operates regardless of historic circumstances everywhere and at all times." (P. 196.) Do you prefer more familiar language, that of original sin? "There can be no actual denial of the lust for power without denying the very conditions of human existence in this world. . . . Whenever we act with reference to our fellow men, we must sin, and we must still sin when we refuse to act." (P. 201.) Man cannot use reason because he is doomed in advance. Do you prefer the theme with mystical variations? Rationalism also "misses the significance of death altogether. It sees in death simply the negation of life, an accident to be avoided and delayed to the utmost." (P. 208.) Death is clearly something else again. Do you want it in the accents of high-class metaphysics? Knowledge is not "of single tangible facts but of the eternal laws by which man moves in the social world. There are, aside from the laws of mathematics, no other eternal laws beside these." Not science but "the insight and wisdom by which more-than-scientific man elevates his experiences into the universal laws of human nature" is what alone "does justice to the true nature of things." (P. 220.)

The whole business is here. Professor Morgenthau's office must be right down the hall from those of Mortimer Adler and Chancellor Hutchins. Flight from

reason runs now with a different and political gait, but the pace is the same.

It is not the point of this Note to quote Dr. Morgenthau at tiresome lengths. But perhaps the best way is to let the victims of nerve paralysis speak for themselves. Were there space we could allow the author to go on into the field of ethics, for there is much of ethics in his book. You will understand, of course, that ethics is something "good in itself," that the "utilitarian" approach to morals (i.e., the approach that believes it is possible to form some rational judgment of human behavior) is amoral and viciously meaningless, and that therefore moral education is no help at all. "This [rationalistic] conception of education is bound to fail for the same reasons which are responsible for the failure of the utilitarian conception of ethics." (P. 210.)

In all honesty and sincerity what are these people after? If man is indeed doomed—and no one could prove to Dr. Morgenthau that he isn't—why go about celebrating it so lustily? But if he isn't doomed in some a priori fashion, just what do the antinaturalists and antihumanists want us to do about it? The present book gives us not one technique for solving any political problem—except to leave it to the "statesmen." (And remember who some of these were.) But, as Clarence Ayres has pointed out, social problems will be solved by reason or they will be solved some other way. That "other way" is apparently what Professor Morgenthau means by power politics —a "realistic" and desperate refuge from thinking, a way that rationalizes any kind of a fascist or totalitarian program, since however evil, it would be a necessary evil. He is simply substituting a "power" myth for a "rationalist" myth. (I use "myth" as Cassier uses it in *The Myth of the State*.)

Let me end more positively. Toward the end, Dr. Morgenthau reproaches "rationalism" for its "one-dimensional conception of the social world." That this is a libel on modern "rationalism" has already been observed. Certainly if scientific man were to oversimplify his problem in this monolithic manner he would be worthy of all Dr. Morgenthau's censures. And were scientific man to ignore the complex character of both man and society he would have much to answer for. As a matter of fact scientific man does realize that to bring intelligence "to bear on a specific social problem is the task of reason in the social world. This task is infinitely more complicated and its fulfilment is infinitely more uncertain and precarious than the mode of thought prevailing in our civilization is willing to admit." These are excellent words, and they are from Dr. Morgenthau. They are also the words of all present-day instrumentalists, who long since have forsaken, if they ever believed in, the straw-man "rationalist" that is set up in this volume. Professor Morgenthau would do political science and political philosophy a much greater service if he would address himself more seriously to the methods, the temper of mind, and the attitudes of approach that characterize today's scientific man, not the man of the eighteenth or nineteenth century. An even greater service would be rendered if the scared, disillusioned, and quasi-mystical retreaters from intelligence would pause long enough in their running to see the strange places they are coming to. Reason may be left behind, but what is it that looms up ahead? G.R.G.

BELIEVING IS SEEING

Were the economic controls set up and operated during the war successful? Since it is rather difficult to visualize how the war could have been fought in their absence, their concrete contributions to victory cannot be easily appraised. But each of the agencies had a particular sector of the economy to guard and we can ask ourselves how well the obligations were met. Did the OPA prevent inflation? Did the War Manpower Commission succeed in mobilizing and directing labor? Did the War Labor Board succeed in settling labor disputes, and in stabilizing wages did it contribute to OPA's effort to prevent inflation? Did the War Production Board succeed in controlling the flow of materials so as to provide the military machine with supplies without depriving the civilian economy of an adequate minimum? If one makes allowances for the imperfections of all human institutions and for the errors of bureaucrats, particularly when they are new to their jobs, the answer to all these questions must be yes. The emergency controls established to control the economy during the war, any unbiased observer must agree, were successful. And they were successful without depriving citizens of any of the cherished liberties which we like to think are the heritage of America.

In the human background of these controls there was much knowledge of political science, of economics, of psychology, and of industrial processes. Further, in working out the controls the responsible officials learned a great deal about how the American economy could be directed for peak efficiency. Hence, it is rather curious that America, now that it has reconverted to peace, has no use for the "planning know-how" developed during the war or the skills developed by the planners.

Such certainly is not the case with improvements in factory and farm production. There can be valid disagreements as to how much production in our farms and factories increased during the war, and there are differences of opinion as to how much technical efficiency was increased during the war. But that the war years brought some improvements there can be no doubt. It is of course obvious that not all the improvements effected during the war have a peacetime use. But many of them do. At least no one suggested during the period of industrial reconversion that we should refuse to utilize the industrial improvements because they were developed to meet the war emergency. An executive of an airplane manufacturing company who refused to utilize any of the war-generated improvements in engines and in design of aircraft because they had been developed for the war emergency would probably be consigned to the care of a psychiatrist by the board of directors.

But why should we not utilize our war-learned knowledge in the area of social engineering as well as in mechanical engineering? Fred Kelly states that people who saw the Wright brothers take off in a heavier-than-air machine would not believe their eyes. These people had been brought up to believe that for man to fly in a heavier-than-air machine was contrary to all known laws of physics. Therefore the vision of the Wright brothers in their early flights was assumed to be an optical illusion.

Something of a similar optical illusion seems to enthrall the American

public today. A planned economy was successful during the war in directing the enormous production of goods and their distribution to military and civilian use without encroaching upon any of our essential liberties. But so indoctrinated are we to the belief that only a "free market economy" can protect our liberties that we refuse to believe the evidence of our senses. And this view is not confined to John Chamberlain, Frederick Hayek, Ludwig von Mises, Henry Hazlitt and other protagonists of the myth that only a "free market economy" will enable us to keep our freedoms. Even the war emergency planners themselves see no peacetime use for the war-developed knowledge of how to run our economy. J. K. Galbraith, an important official in OPA, explains in a recent issue of the *Quarterly Journal of Economics* why price fixing proved successful during the war. But he does not point out how this knowledge can be turned to good use in our peacetime economy.

The present crisis is not merely a matter of finding a formula which will keep the peace between labor and capital; which will provide adequate but not superfluous purchasing power to assure full employment; it is a matter of using intelligence in the solution of our social problems. When we can get away from the notion that there is one "perfect," "natural," or "right" economic system to which we must adhere no matter what the evidence concerning its inadequacy may be, we will be on the road to solve our economic problems. But our record of reconversion to a *status quo ante* must leave one pretty pessimistic about the prospect of achieving this desideratum in the immediate future.

—V.C.

FIRMNESS AND BIPARTISANSHIP

An Associated Press poll of the outstanding political events of the past November and December would probably put in the first two places the election, in which the Republicans won a majority in both Houses of Congress, and the growth of Russian co-operation as it showed itself in the closing days of the United Nations meeting in New York. It is pertinent to ask what meaning these events have for American foreign policy.

The victory of the Republicans highlights one of President Roosevelt's shrewdest accomplishments — bipartisanship in foreign policy. The Republicans were cut in on foreign policy under the wartime stress of national unity and with the far-sighted notion that the Senate should be prevented from scuttling the peace. The scheme now undergoes its first serious peacetime test. It should succeed to the extent that it brings stability and a fully international view to American policy. It will fail to the extent that it prevents discussion or allows the Republicans or some Republican faction, under pretense of full collaboration with the rest of the country, to manipulate policy to their own ends—which almost certainly would be in the direction of isolation.

Bipartisanship is an experiment. It has never been tried for any length of time during peace, in foreign or any domestic policy. Under the American system, it should have the theoretical advantage of carrying approval from a greater majority of the American people than would be possible to either the

Democratic or Republican party by itself. Will it work, now that the shoe is on the alternate foot? Only to the extent, it would seem, that the critics of normal Republican policy are wide-awake. Already an important part of the Republican Party is preparing to destroy the program of reciprocal trade treaties. And officials of both the State Department and the NAM are talking and planning a "new kind" of dollar diplomacy. Both of these developments —a strong tariff and dollar diplomacy —are in the direction of economic imperialism and both, in addition to whatever evil they directly foster of themselves, can only lead in the long run away from true international collaboration. The danger of a bipartisan foreign policy is that we shall go to sleep and wake up to find that bipartisanship has vanished, that in fact the policy is no longer one which could be stamped with the approval of a great majority of the American people.

As to the Russian co-operation of November 25 to December 15, it highlights a far different aspect of American policy but something quite as important. Russian reasons for greater friendliness are highly interesting but for discussion here may be ignored. On the American side, co-operation was precipitated by American firmness. ("Tough" our policy was not, in the sense demanded by reactionaries and feared by many on the left.) We had already conceded much and had shown our willingness to compromise further, but not until we drew a sharp line and stuck to it, did co-operation set in.

This is not to say that drawing lines or standing firm can be the sum total of our policy or even of our strategy. In Britain, the London *Economist* has suggested that we must be careful, now that the immovable object has been taken away, not to fall on our faces. If Russian co-operation continues, we have to co-operate also.

But American firmness has helped to precipitate something else of equal value with Russian co-operation, something which has not received so much national attention. Forced to take a stand or retreat, we have stood—and are now committed, more than before, to international participation everywhere in the world. That nothing foreign to these shores is foreign to our real interests is coming to acceptance in the concrete terms of American relations with other countries. Firmness drove it home.

Bipartisanship should make possible overwhelming majority support of foreign policy. Firmness in action has begun to give us a sense of world-wide responsibility. Separately or together, these two do not make a foreign policy. Yet they have won a place as the practical, immediate foundations without which no foreign policy in the near future can be built. Liberals should accept both and take them into account.

P. B.

CONTRIBUTORS

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